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THE

HISTORY

OF

F R A N C E,

UNDER THE KINGS OF

THE RACE OF VALOIS,

FROM

THE ACCESSION OF CHARLES THE FIFTH,
IN 1364,

TO

THE DEATH OF CHARLES THE NINTH,
IN 1574.

BY NATHL. WILLIAM WRAXALL, ESQ.

III

THE THIRD EDITION,
WITH VERY CONSIDERABLE AUGMENTATIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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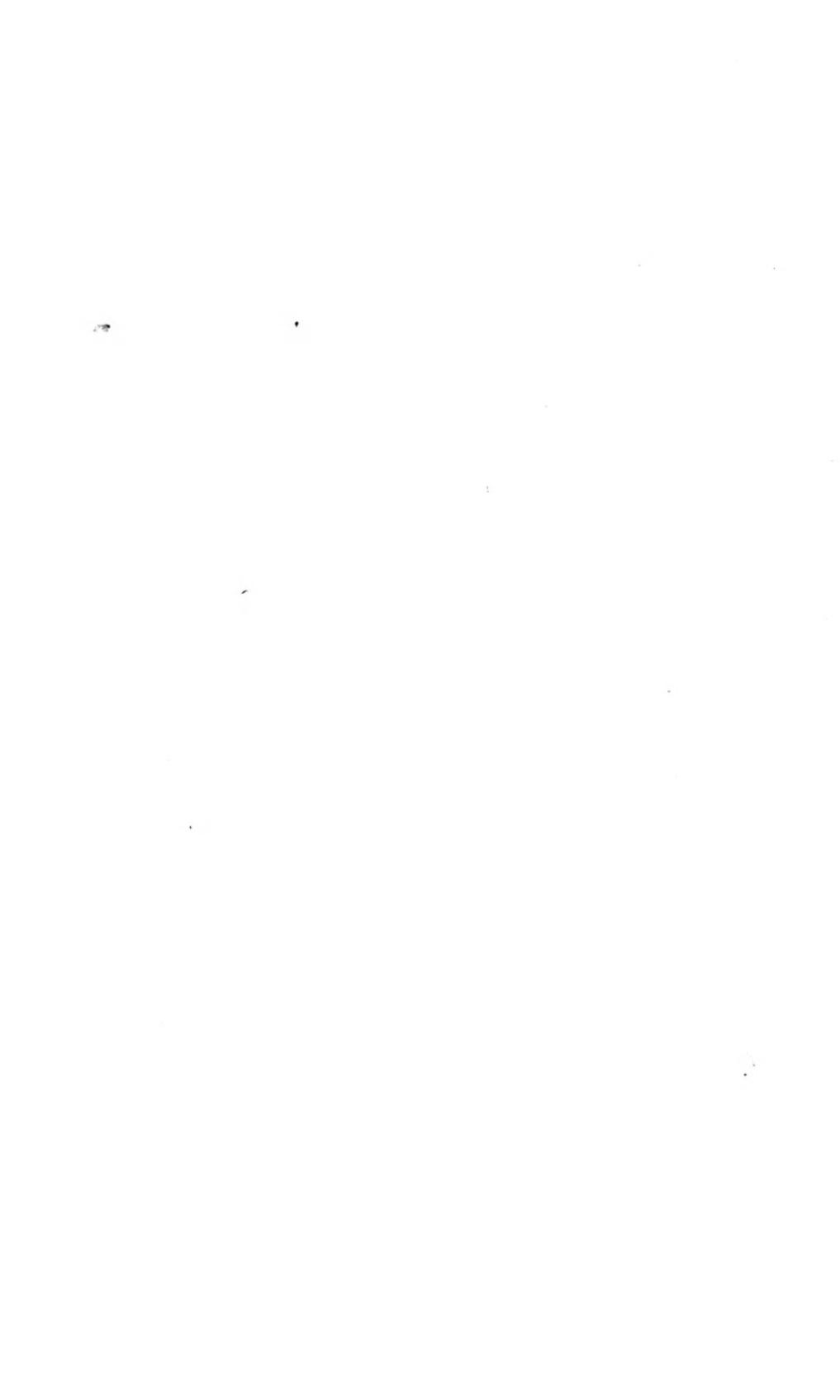
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OF
FRANCE,

UNDER THE KINGS OF
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1547. **M.** **31.** **I**F the death of so able and experienced a prince as Francis the first, at a period of life when his character promised happiness and tranquillity to his people, was an event deeply to be lamented by those to whom the interests of the state were dear; yet, as his successor had attained to full years of manhood, and did not appear to be deficient in the qualities requisite for government, his loss might be deemed not irreparable.

Henry the second, who ascended the throne, was accounted the handsomest prince of his age, and one of the most accomplished gentlemen in his dominions. He excelled in all the martial exercises where vigor, aided by address, are necessary; and bore away

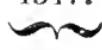
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prize in tournaments, with distinguished grace. 1547. 
His heart was beneficent and humane; his temper courteous, open, and liberal; his intentions were always honorable, and directed to the public welfare: but he neither possessed the capacity, nor the discernment, which Francis discovered. His mind, cast in a less vigorous mold than that of his father, naturally tractable, and yielding to others, formed him to be under the guidance of favorites.

The dying exhortations of his predecessor appear neither to have made an impression upon his heart, nor to have produced any effect upon his conduct. Scarcely were the late king's funeral rites performed, when Henry violated his commands in every point. Montmorenci, who had been during several years in disgrace, recalled to court, was loaded April, with honors: while the admiral d'Annebaut was dismissed, and the Cardinal de Tournon only retained a shadow of authority. In their place, Francis, Duke of Guise, so celebrated in the subsequent reigns, and the Marechal de St. André, were substituted. That pernicious profusion, which had characterized the commencement of the late king's

1547. reign, was carried to a more unjustifiable length; and the treasures amassed during his concluding years, were dissipated with wanton extravagance.

Diana de Poitiers, created Duchess de Valentinois, who may be said to have almost divided the crown with her lover, and who carried her influence, personal as well as political, to a height which the duchess d'Estampes never could attain under Francis; was at once the directing principle of Henry's councils, and the object of his tenderest attachment. This extraordinary woman, unparalleled in the annals of ancient or modern history, is said to have retained her beauty undiminished even in the autumn of life, and to have preserved her powers of captivating, in defiance of time and natural decay. She was already forty-eight, while Henry had scarcely attained his twenty-ninth year. Her father, John de Poitiers, Lord of St. Vallier, had been condemned to die, in 1523, as an accomplice in the revolt of the Constable, Charles of Bourbon; and tho' he escaped with his life, yet he was degraded from the rank of nobility, and all his estates were confiscated.

fiscated*. She was married, in the last year 1547.  of Louis the twelfth's reign, to Louis de Brezé, Count de Maulevrier, grand Senechal of Normandy, by whom she had two daughters then alive.

It is not certain at what period her connexions with the Dauphin Henry, first commenced; but it appears, that before he had completed his eighteenth year, her ascendancy over him was well established. All the contemporary authors agree, that her attrac-

* Diana de Poitiers was born on the fifth of September, 1499. Mezerai, the president Henault, and many other writers have asserted, that she preserved her father's life, by the sacrifice of her chastity to Francis the first; from whose embraces she passed into those of his son: but this story is very doubtful, and most probably, false. She had been married near ten years to Louis, Count de Maulevrier, at that time; and consequently had not, as those authors seem to imagine, her *virgin honor* to bestow. Besides, tho' her father's life was not taken away, his punishment was changed for another, still worse than death; that of being immured perpetually between four walls, in which there should be only one little window, thro' which his provisions might be given him. St. Vallier died of a fever, occasioned by his terror, in a very short time afterwards.

1536. tions were not merely personal : on the contrary, to her external endowments, she united a cultivated, as well as solid understanding, wit, and talents for conversation. Warmly devoted to her friends and partizans, she was likewise a dangerous and an implacable enemy ; of a proud and unsubmitting spirit, she transfused those sentiments into the royal bosom, and impelled Henry to actions of vigor and firmness. Rapacious of power, she was yet more fond of flattery and submission. The courtiers crowded to express their dutiful attentions to this favorite : even the Constable Montmorenci, rude, haughty, and more accustomed to insult than to flatter, bent beneath her, and condescended to ingratiate himself by the most servile adulation.

The ties which chiefly bound Henry to Diana de Poitiers, were probably at first those of pleasure ; and afterwards, of taste and habit. The Duchess d'Estampes exerted in vain every art of female rivalry and hatred, to disunite them. These efforts only increased the passion, which they were designed to extinguish. The king, who seemed to know no limits to his attachment, gave her

her every public, as well as private proof, of her ascendancy over him. Unrestrained by that decorum which modern manners exact even from sovereigns, he derived a gratification from transmitting to posterity, the marks of his devotion to her. The name of Diana was joined with that of Henry, in contempt of decency, on the most magnificent edifices of State. The furniture of his palaces, and his armor, were distinguished with her device and emblems; a “ moon, bow, and arrows,” which were interwoven with those assumed by himself.

Every favor or preferment was obtained thro’ her interest; and Brissac, the most amiable as well as gallant nobleman of the court, who was supposed to be peculiarly acceptable to her, was created grand master of the artillery, at her particular request*.

The

* Charles de Cossé, Marechal de Brissac, was brought up with Francis, Dauphin of France, eldest son to Francis the first, whose premature death in 1546, deeply affected Brissac, and induced him to dedicate himself entirely to the profession of arms. He eminently distinguished his courage at the siege of Perpignan, in 1541, where he was wounded; after having rescued, at the imminent hazard of his life, the

1547. The Count de Bossu, who had been intimately connected by friendship, if not by closer ties, with the late king's mistress ; and who was besides accused of treasonable practices with the emperor ; could only shelter himself from punishment, by a resignation of his palace at Marchez, to the Cardinal of Lorrain. The Duchess d'Estampes, unsup-

French artillery, which had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards. He was slender, and of a very delicate figure ; but his face was so uncommonly handsome, that the ladies of the court named him always “ *Le beau Brissac.* ” In all the campaigns towards the conclusion of Francis the first's reign, but peculiarly at the siege of Landrecy in 1543, he gained a high reputation.—Under Henry the second he commanded the armies of France in Piedmont, where he successfully opposed the greatest Imperial generals, Ferdinand de Gonzague, and the duke of Alva.—After the death of Henry in 1559, returning into his own country, he was made governor of Picardy : he expired of the gout, at Paris, on the 31st December, 1563, being only fifty-seven years of age.—It cannot be doubted, that he was beloved by the duchess de Valentinois ; and jealousy was believed to have been the motive which induced Henry the second to confer on him the command in Italy, as it necessarily compelled Brissac to quit his mistress.

ported

ported by the servile croud who had attended ^{1547.} on her in Francis's reign, was compelled to quit the court: but Diana, whether from motives of prudence or of magnanimity, is uncertain, did not attempt to deprive her of the possessions which she had acquired from that Prince's generosity. Disgraced, and forsaken, the Duchess retired to one of her country seats, where she survived for many years in total obscurity*.

Henry, on his return from a visit which he made soon after his accession, to the frontier of Picardy, not only permitted, but was publicly present with his whole court, at a duel fought between Guy de Chabot-Jarnac,

* It is somewhat extraordinary, that the year of the Duchess d'Estampes's death, is not mentioned by any contemporary author. All that we certainly know is, that she was alive in 1575, near thirty years after Francis's decease, as she did homage at that time for one of her estates. She became a protectress of the Lutherans or Hugonots, for whom she had always entertained a concealed affection; and this is the only circumstance with which we are acquainted relative to her retreat. Her criminal conduct during the last years of the reign of Francis the first, deprive her of all title to historical respect, or to the esteem of posterity.

1547. and Francis de Vivonne-La Chataigneraie, which was fought in all the forms of chivalry, at St. Germain-en-Laye. The quarrel, which had originated in an accusation of La Chataigneraie, respecting the Duchess d'Estampes's infidelity to the late king ; was increased by a second imputation thrown by him on Jarnac, still more dishonorable ; that of his having been criminally intimate with his father's second wife. La Chataigneraie was one of the most accomplished cavaliers in France, and one the most personally acceptable to the king. Expert in the practice of arms, vain of his acknowledged skill, and relying on the royal favor, he despised his antagonist : while Jarnac, more cautious, and neither supported by superior bodily force, nor by any hope of Henry's partial protection, endeavored to supply these defects by address. A fever had even diminished at the time, his usual strength and activity ; but the presumptuous negligence of La Chataigneraie decided the combat in his favor. By a thrust wholly unexpected, Jarnac having wounded him in the ham, threw him to the ground. Henry, anxious to save his favorite, instantly flung

flung down his Baton, in order to put an end 1547. to the engagement. Jarnac, as the law of arms required, desisted: but his competitor, stung with disappointment, covered with shame, and incapable of surviving these accumulated mortifications, would not accept of a life which he deemed ignominious; and having torn off the bandages applied to his wounds, soon after expired. The king was so deeply affected with the event of this combat, so opposite to his wishes and expectations, that he made a solemn vow, never during his reign to permit of a second similar judicial appeal to arms, on any pretext whatsoever.

The causes of future wars, which, tho' suspended, were not extinguished by the death of Francis the first, began already to display themselves between the emperor and Henry: as yet, however, many circumstances conduced to retard any open rupture. This latter prince, in order to shew himself to his new subjects, made a progress thro' part of his dominions, accompanied with splendid entries into the principal cities of France. On his return, he celebrated the nuptials of Anthony, Duke of Vendome, first Prince of the

1548
&
1549.

1549. the blood, with Jane d'Albret, heiress of the
Oct. 18. kingdom of Navarre, at the city of Moulins*.

A dan-

* The young princess had been solemnly espoused several years before, to the Duke of Cleves; and Francis the first was present at that ceremony, which was performed with great splendor, at Chatelleraud in Poictou: but the marriage was not consummated, on account of her extreme youth, she being at that time little more than twelve years old. The day was rendered remarkable by the dismissal and disgrace of the Constable Montmorenci; an event which was preceded by a very singular circumstance, supposed to foretel his approaching fall. The young bride, according to the manners of the age, was dressed in robes so weighty, loaded with so many pearls and jewels, that not being able to move, Francis commanded the Constable to take her in his arms, and to carry her to the church. Tho' this custom was usual at the nuptials of great persons, yet Montmorenci was deeply hurt by being selected for such an office; and regarding it as an incontestible proof of his ruin, hesitated not to declare to his friends, that his favor was at an end. The event justified his suspicion; for, immediately after the banquet, the king dismissed him from his service, and he quitted the court without delay. Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, mother to Jane d'Albret, was supposed, by her interest with her brother, to have accelerated his disgrace. The Constable had not scrupled to accuse her to Francis, of being attached

A dangerous insurrection, which broke out 1549. at this time in the province of Guienne, rendering it necessary to send into that part of the kingdom, some general of rank and experience; the duke of Guise and the Constable were both jointly charged with the commission. The former, courteous, humane, and warmly desirous to conciliate the popular favor, entered Saintonge and Angoumois, dispensing pardon, or only punishing where

attached to, and of protecting the Hugonots. By this imputation against his beloved sister, he offended the king; and raised up an implacable, as well as powerful enemy, in Margaret herself.

The marriage of Jane with the duke of Cleves, which had been chiefly made in compliance with the wishes of Francis the first, in order to attach to himself that powerful prince; was afterwards dissolved from motives of policy, the Duke having submitted to, and reconciled himself with the emperor. But, Brenon says, that Anthony, Duke of Vendome, had great scruples of delicacy relative to espousing the princess; and that he had recourse to the Seneschale of Poictou, who was a lady of honor to the young queen of Navarre at the time of her first nuptials, in order to clear up his suspicions. She did so; by giving him the most solemn and satisfactory proofs, that Jane's first marriage had been merely a ceremony, and was never consummated.

necessary,

1549. necessary, with lenity and gentleness. But Montmorenci, naturally inexorable, and displaying a severity of temper which approached to cruelty, marked his course along the river Garonne, with blood. Deaf to the supplications of the inhabitants, who had recourse to Oct. submissions and entreaties, he caused above a hundred of the principal citizens of Bourdeaux to be put to death, and deprived the city of all its municipal rights or privileges. A line of conduct so opposite, produced among the people sentiments equally dissimilar with respect to the two commanders; and from this period the family of Guise began to date that popularity, which in the sequel they carried to so dangerous a length, against the crown and the monarchy itself.

The court meanwhile, little affected by these events in the provinces, was wholly engaged in cerousals and festivities. A gallant and warlike prince of the character of Henry, who delighted in exercises of prowess and dexterity, was naturally followed in his taste for such diversions, by his nobility. Diana de Poitiers, Duchess of Valentinois, presided at these entertainments, which were given in her honor;

honor: while the queen, Catherine of Medicis, tho' still young, agreeable in her person, and of uncommon capacity; tho' endowed besides with dissimulation and manners the most temporising; yet acted only an inferior and subservient part. She enjoyed however the honor of being solemnly crowned at St. Denis, and of making afterwards a triumphal entry, accompanied by her husband, into the capital. But, these were only pageantries of state; and Henry, who never admitted her to a real participation of his authority, seems to have been aware that her character and abilities, however eminent, were more calculated to embroil, than to assist, the affairs of government.

By a transition wonderful and inexplicable, if any thing in human nature can be so esteemed, these tournaments and entertainments were immediately succeeded by exhibitions of a very different nature; which mistaken piety, or, the intemperate zeal of the age, substituted by turns in the place of gallantry and pleasure. A number of unfortunate proselytes to the doctrines of Luther and Calvin, were publicly and solemnly burnt at

Paris,

1549. Paris, as an example to deter their companions; while the king and his whole court did not hesitate to be present at these inhuman sacrifices, which were performed with a studied refinement of cruelty, and varied in different modes of punishment.

Dec. 21. Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, died about this time, at the castle of Odos, in the province of Bigorre, near the foot of the Pyrenean mountains. Warmly attached to the late king her brother, she had never recovered the afflicting intelligence of his death. If Francis the first was the greatest monarch of his age, Margaret must indisputably be esteemed the most accomplished princess. Devoted to the love of letters, she encouraged and patronized men of genius and learning, from whom she received in return the flattering epithets of, "the Tenth Muse," and "the Fourth Grace." Herself an author, she has left us incontestible proofs of her elegant genius, her wit, and pleasing style, which though negligent, is full of charms. Suspected of a partiality towards Hugonotism, she was likewise suspected of an inclination to gallantry; and perhaps might have been equally

equally sensible in turn, at different periods of her life, to the two principal movements of susceptible minds, devotion and love. Her Tales, which are scarcely inferior to those of Boccacio, seem to confirm this sentiment; as, tho' they ever inculcate and commend the virtues of chastity and female fidelity; yet they are nevertheless found to contain in certain parts, an animation and warmth of colouring, that give room to suppose the writer of them was fully sensible to the delights of the passion, which she censured and condemned*.

Hostilities

* Margaret was two years older than her brother, having been born on the 11th of April, 1492. Bonnivet, presuming on his personal accomplishments, concealed himself under her bed; and attempted to violate her honor: but she repulsed him, tore off the skin from his face with her nails, and afterwards complained to the king her brother of this daring attempt, at which she owns that he only laughed. She has related this adventure, somewhat enigmatically however, among her Tales.—Tho' Margaret was sometimes so devout as to compose hymns, yet she was certainly an “Esprit fort,” and appears to have even entertained great doubts concerning the immortality of the soul.

Brantome has preserved a very curious story, relative

1550. Hostilities having again taken place between
March. France and England, Henry laid siege to
Boulogne.

to the death of one of her maids of honor, at which she was present. The queen, who was much attached to her, could not be induced by any entreaties to quit her bed-side, when expiring : on the contrary, she continued to fix her eyes on the dying person with uncommon eagerness and perseverance, till she had breathed her last. The ladies of her court having expressed to her majesty their astonishment and surprize at this conduct ; requested to know, what satisfaction she could derive from so close an inspection of the agonies of death ? Her answer marked a most singular and inquisitive mind. She said, “ that having often heard the “ most learned doctors and ecclesiastics assert, that on “ the extinction of the body, the immortal part was “ unloosed and set at liberty ; she could not restrain “ her anxious curiosity to observe, if any indications “ of such a separation were discernible : that none “ such she had been able in any degree to discover ; “ and that, if she was not happily very firm in her “ faith and adherence to the catholic religion, she “ should not know what to think of this departure of “ the soul.”

Francis the first took a pleasure in publicly declaring, that to her tenderness, care, and attentions, he was indebted for his life, during the severe illness which he had suffered in his confinement at Madrid. She had

the

Boulogne: The city was at length surrendered 1550. to France, owing to the weakness and dissen-

the boldness to reproach the emperor and his council, in the most animated terms, for their unmanly and cruel treatment of the king her brother. It is said that Charles the fifth was so much irritated by these reprobations, which he was conscious of meriting, that he had intended to seize on her person, and to detain her prisoner, if she had stayed beyond the time granted her for remaining in the Spanish dominions. Margaret received intimation of this design: without being in the least afraid, she mounted on horseback, crossed all the provinces between Madrid and Bayonne, and arrived on the frontier of France, a very few hours before the expiration of her safe conduct.

She was seized, says Brantome, with a catarrh, of which she died, while she was intently gazing on a comet, supposed to predict the death of Pope Paul the third: her illness lasted eight days. She seems to have had the same constitutional dread and terror of death, which characterized her mother Louisa. The ladies who attended about her bed, announcing to her when in extremity, that she must prepare herself for her end, and fix her thoughts on the joys of a celestial state; “*Tout cela est vrai,*” replied the expiring queen; “*mais nous demeurons si long temps en terre avant que venir la.*” She was fifty-eight years of age at the time of her decease, and left only one daughter, Jane, queen of Navarre in her own right, mother of Henry the fourth.

1550. tions which agitated the minority of Edward the sixth, king of England, increased by the factions which convulsed the kingdom. The house of Guise, firmly united with the Duke of Valentinois, continuing to aggrandize itself, acquired every year some new establishment in France. The genius and great qualities of the Duke of Guise, sustained by those of the Cardinal of Lorrain, his brother, widely different, but equally distinguished, eclipsed all other merit. Even the Constable Montmorenci, tho' superior to any rival in the king's affections, and possessing an unlimited influence over him, yet could not see unmoved, the rapid progress which the Guises made in conciliating universal favour; and beheld with jealousy these foreign competitors, who threatened to supplant the ancient nobility of the kingdom.

1551. Italy, which during more than half a century, since the first invasion of Naples by Charles the eighth, had been the principal scene of war between the emperor and France, was again menaced with indications of approaching hostilities. The grandsons of the late Pope, Paul the third, against whom

Julius

Julius the third, newly elected to fill the papal chair, had taken up arms, with intent to dispossess them of the duchy of Parma ; claimed the protection of Henry, which was gladly afforded to them by that prince*. Happy at

* Alexander Farnese, who ascended the pontifical throne under the name of Paul the third, had been raised to the purple by Alexander the sixth, in 1493 ; and was about sixty-seven years of age at the time of his election, after the death of Pope Clement the seventh. He was a prince of some ability, and taste in the arts ; but his reign was sullied by the marks of excessive and culpable fondness which he shewed for his son, Peter Louis Farnese, to whose elevation he sacrificed the dearest interests and possessions of the holy see. On this son, his issue by a lady to whom he was married before he embraced the ecclesiastical profession, he bestowed the duchy of Parma in sovereignty. But, the ingratitude of his grandson Octavio Farnese, who had menaced the Pope to join the Imperial general, Ferdinand de Gonzague, against his own grandfather ; affected him so deeply, as to occasion his death. On receiving this intelligence he fainted, and remained in a sort of lethargy for near four hours, without betraying any sign of life ; at the end of which time he was seized with a violent fever, which terminated his existence on the tenth of November, 1549, at his palace on the Quirinal Hill, in Rome, after a pontificate of fifteen years.

1551. finding an occasion again to interfere in the affairs beyond the Alps, from which the French had been excluded since the peace of Crespy; he prepared to renew his attempts on the Milanese, so long and so unfortunately contended for by his father. Brissac, who was sent into Piedmont, had orders to assist the duke of Parma; but, without coming to any open declaration of war against the emperor, Julius, after an ineffectual endeavor to induce the king to renounce his allies, made an equally unsuccessful effort upon the capital of the Duke of Parma, of which his general was obliged to raise the siege.

Charles the fifth, tho' he had scarcely passed his fiftieth year, found himself already oppressed with all the maladies and infirmities of a premature old age. Solyman, Sultan of the Turks, his great and constant antagonist on the eastern frontier of Europe, threatened the Hungarian dominions of his brother Ferdinand. The emperor himself, on the other hand, had justly alarmed all the princes of the Cerman empire, by the arbitrary deposition of John Frederic, elector of Saxony; by his imprisonment of the Landgrave of Hesse,

Hesse, and by his open infringement of all the Germanic rights and liberties. Even Ferdinand, king of the Romans, was justly irritated by Charles's endeavors to compel him to resign the succession of the Imperial crown, in favour of Philip, prince of Spain, his son. These united considerations impelling Henry no longer to dissemble his intentions, or to delay a rupture with the emperor, Brissac began the campaign in Piedmont; while Anthony, Duke of Vendome, entered the provinces of Artois and Hainault. The king strengthened himself still further by a secret alliance with Maurice, the new Duke Oct. of Saxony, head of the protestant league; whom he promised to assist with troops and money against Charles, who evidently aimed at establishing the same despotic power in Germany, which he exercised in Spain and Italy.

The effects of this confederacy were soon visible, in the unexpected and rapid march of Maurice, who had nearly taken the emperor prisoner in the city of Innspruck, while he amused his Imperial majesty with fallacious proposals of peace. Charles, terrified, over- 1552.

1552. reached, and on the brink of a shameful captivity, fled in a litter by torch-light, over the mountains of the Tyrol, with a few attendants ; and scarcely imagined himself in security at Villach in Carinthia, almost upon the frontier of the Venetian territories. Henry, improving this favorable juncture, marched in person into Lorrain ; and having first possessed himself of the person of the young Duke Charles, nephew to the emperor, seized on the cities of Metz, Toul, and Verdun. These places, as being dependencies of the empire, not constituting any portion of the dominions of the emperor, did not expect, and were unprepared for such an attack. They have ever since remained to France, without any interruption.

March. Previous to his departure for this expedition, Henry vested the regency in the queen ; but he at the same time associated with her Bertrandj, who was keeper of the seals, and implicitly devoted to the Duchess de Valentinois. Catherine of Medicis, during the short time in which she was entrusted with the administration, does not appear to have abused it to any purposes unworthy of herself, or injurious

injurious to the nation. That pernicious duplicity, and those specious, but ruinous artifices, which afterwards so eminently characterized her government under the reigns of her three successive sons; were repressed or concealed during the life of Henry. Accommodating in her manners, and mistress of consummate dissimulation, she submitted to the Duchess de Valentinois's superior influence, without a murmur: far from making any effort to overturn or oppose her rival, Catherine professed for her the most disinterested friendship.

Maurice's success and masterly policy having soon reduced the emperor to a necessity of complying with his offers of peace, a treaty was signed between them at Passau, which effectually secured from future invasion, the independence of the German princes, ecclesiastical and civil. Charles willingly accepted these overtures, and even accelerated their conclusion, from the desire of being in a condition to retaliate the injuries which he had received from the king of France. The insult, as well as the indignity which had been offered to him, as supreme head of the empire, in the height of his prosperity, by the capture of three

1552. three great cities which were under the Imperial protection, deeply affected his mind. Animated by resentment, he levied a prodigious army, with the resolution of immediately laying siege to the city of Metz. In his eagerness to recover this important barrier of Germany, he seems to have neglected the dictates of prudence, and to have forgotten the lessons of his own experience, acquired in preceding Oct. 18. campaigns. The season was already far advanced, when he began his attack. Nevertheless, as the place was of a large extent, only surrounded with weak and ruinous fortifications, he would probably have rendered himself master of it, if the Duke of Guise had not frustrated all his efforts. This great prince, whose military talents place him above every other commander of that age, having thrown himself into Metz, withstood the emperor's assaults with unshaken intrepidity and perseverance. The unusual severity of the winter, which assisted his valor, contributed to the destruction of the Imperial forces.

1553. Charles was at length compelled to raise the 1st Jan. siege, after having lost thirty thousand soldiers before the place ; and to begin his retreat

treat back into Germany. His flight across the Alps, after the unfortunate campaign of Provence, disastrous as it was, fell short of the calamities which his troops underwent in the present retreat: while the Duke of Guise's humanity towards the numbers of them who fell into his hands, from inability to accompany their commander in his flight; shone as conspicuously as his courage had done during the siege, and contributed to augment the lustre of his character.

In Piedmont, where Brissac commanded, the war was feebly supported between him and Ferdinand de Gonzague, the emperor's general. Sultan Solyman, the firm ally of Henry, as he had been of his father Francis, aided the king of France with his fleets in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, the French gained possession of the city of Sienna by intrigue; a place which, from its position in the center of Italy, if it had been preserved, would have facilitated in the greatest degree, any attempts on the Milanese, or on the kingdom of Naples.

In the spring, the emperor, notwithstanding

1553.

1553. ing his infirmities, re-appeared in the field. Anxious to repair his defeat before Metz, he entered France, where the town of Terouenne, which resisted his attacks, first felt the weight of his vengeance. With a barbarity more worthy of Attila, than of a Christian Prince, he took and utterly demolished it, razing the foundations to the ground. Francis de Montmorenci, the Constable's eldest son, who had gallantly defended Terouenne, remained a prisoner. Emanuel Philibert, the young Duke of Savoy, expelled from his own dominions by the French arms; to whom Charles had entrusted the supreme command of his forces during this campaign, began already to display that capacity for war, by which he was afterwards so eminently distinguished. He besieged Hesdin in Picardy, which capitulated: but, while the articles of surrender were under agitation, a grenade thrown by a priest into the town, set fire to a mine; under the ruins of which, Horace Farnese, duke of Castro, grandson to Pope Paul the third, who had married Diana, the king's natural daughter, was destroyed with fifty others.

others *. On the other hand, the Constable, to whom Henry had entrusted the command of his army on that frontier; always inglorious or unfortunate in the field, performed scarcely any action worthy of commemoration. A severe indisposition with which he was afflicted soon afterwards, terminating the operations of the campaign, permitted the troops to return into winter-quarters.

The early death of Edward the sixth, king ^{June 21.} of England, interrupted the harmony which had subsisted between the two crowns, during some years. Mary, his sister, who succeeded to the throne; in opposition equally to the wishes of her people and of Henry, espoused Philip, prince of Spain, the emperor's son. ^{1554.} ^{July.}

* Diana de Valois, whom Henry the second legitimated, was one of the most amiable, accomplished, and beautiful princesses who have appeared in France. Her mother's name was Philippa Duc, of Montcaillier in Piedmont. Diana was highly and deservedly dear to Henry her father, and not less so to the three succeeding kings, her brothers. When left a widow by the Duke of Castro's premature death, she was only fourteen years old: she afterwards married Francis, Duke of Montmorenci. Her name occurs frequently in the history of Henry the third's life and reign.

1554. This union, as it greatly increased the influence and power of the house of Austria, by throwing the English arms into the scale; was ill calculated to diminish the jealousy of the king of France, or to produce a peace between him and Charles. The emperor, tho' disabled by the gout, which had contracted the sinews of one of his legs, and had deprived him of the use of one of his arms, appeared for the last time, in the field. Henry, who, as well as his predecessor, had ever studiously sought the occasion of personally engaging his antagonist; endeavored to provoke him to a general action. With this view, he ravaged Hainault, Brabant, and the Cambresis; demolished Mariemont, a palace of pleasure belonging to Mary, queen of Hungary, the emperor's sister, who was governess of the Low Countries; and, as if in retaliation for the destruction of Terouenne, razed the magnificent castle of Bins, which she had lately constructed*.

Charles

* Mary, sister to the emperor Charles the fifth, and widow of Louis the second, king of Hungary, who perished in the battle of Mohatz, gained by the Turks in

Charles having marched to the relief of the town of Renty, which was besieged by the French, a considerable skirmish ensued ; in

in 1591 ; was a princess of virtue and capacity. She was made governess of the Low Countries in 1531 ; and, during an administration of twenty-four years, rendered herself exceedingly beloved by the Flemings. Mary conducted the war in which the emperor her brother was engaged against Henry the second of France, with equal vigor and ability. In 1555, she laid down the government of the Netherlands, and retired into Spain ; where she remained till the death of Charles the fifth in 1558, whom she followed to the grave within a very few days, at a time when she had intended to return into the Low Countries. The French writers have accused her of a propensity to gallantry, and have named Barbançon, a Flemish nobleman, distinguished by the graces of his person, as her lover : but this imputation is contradicted by the whole tenor of the queen's life and character. Calumny, which has ever ventured to go further, has named Mary as the mother of Don John of Austria, by her own brother, the emperor Charles. But, as she was born in 1503, and Don John in 1547, the queen must have been forty-four years old, at the time when it is pretended that she brought this son into the world. It was however generally believed by the contemporaries, that the mother of Don John, was a princess of the highest rank ; and that in order to cover and conceal the dishonor of her family, Barbe Blomberg, a lady of Ratisbon, was asserted to have been the mother of that prince.

which

1554. which the Imperial forces were obliged to
Aug. 13. retreat, after a considerable loss of men and
artillery. The place itself, notwithstanding,
continued to resist the besiegers ; and the
king, leaving part of his army under the com-
mand of the Duke of Vendome, while he dis-
missed the remainder, returned to Paris. After
some few inconsiderable advantages, Charles
finally closed his military career, and put an
end to the campaign. It was the prelude to
a far more important retreat which he already
meditated ; that of his abdication, and re-
tirement from public life.

April. In Italy, Sienna was lost by the French,
after a long and obstinate defence : but Bris-
sac maintained the national honor in Pied-
mont, tho' he was ill supported at court, and
was opposed in the field by the duke of Alva,
who insolently threatened, that he would drive
him back over the mountains into France.
This gallant commander would even have re-
lieved Sienna, and have forced the enemy to
raise the siege ; if the opposition of Mont-
morenci and the Guises, who were jealous of
his military reputation, had not defeated his
1555. measures. Mary, queen of England, assum-
ing

ing the character of a mediatress, attempted to bring about an accommodation between the contending princes; in order to effect which, a congress was held in a splendid tent near Calais: but it produced no beneficial consequences, under the auspices of such a princess.

The death of Henry d'Albret, titular king of Navarre, who closed his reign about this time, at Hagetmau in Bearn, left that principality, the only remaining portion of his ancient dominions, exposed to the enterprizes and attacks of the king of France. Henry, who had intended to incorporate this small kingdom with the French monarchy, was prevented from accomplishing his purpose, by the diligence of Anthony, Duke of Vendome; that prince having married Jane d'Albret, sole heiress and representative of the sovereigns of Navarre*. It is impossible

not

* Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, was an amiable prince, but not distinguished by any extraordinary endowments of mind. He was born in 1502, and in 1520 he recovered from Charles the fifth his kingdom of Navarre, which was lost again with equal rapidity. He

1555. not to commiserate the fate of these unfortunate princes, who, situated between two powerful monarchies ; after seeing the Spanish part of their territories torn from them, by the injustice of Ferdinand the catholic ; were menaced with the loss of the small remainder, by the ambition of the king of France, their relative, protector, and ally. So incensed was Henry at the resistance made by the Duke of Vendome, to the proposition of receiving lands in France, as an equivalent or compensation for his rights in Bearn ; that, refusing to grant the government of Picardy to Anthony's brother, Louis, prince of Condé, he instantly conferred it on Gaspard de Châtillon, Count de Coligny.

The emperor, mortified at the decline of his military reputation, no less than at the success which seemed to attend on Henry ; broken by diseases, and perhaps partaking in

married, in 1527, Margaret, Duchess of Alençon, sister to Francis the first, by whom he had only one daughter, Jane, mother of Henry the fourth, who, at length, united in his person the kingdoms of France and Navarre.

some degree of his mother Joanna's more deplorable disorder of mind, determined to resign all his vast possessions to his son Philip*. He executed this extraordinary renunciation soon after, at Brussels: yet, as if after parting with the substance, he still adhered to the shadow of his greatness, Charles reserved to himself the imperial dignity, which he retained for one year longer.

The profusion and magnificence of the court, together with the unavoidable expence attendant on wars maintained against such powerful enemies; rendered it necessary to

* Joanna, queen of Castile and Arragon, terminated her wretched life only six months before her son the emperor's abdication: she survived her husband the archduke Philip, forty-nine years; and was above seventy at her own decease, which happened on the 12th of April, 1555. Her attachment to him, and his untimely death, chiefly contributed to deprive her of her intellects. She was shut up in the castle of Tordesillas, almost abandoned, sleeping upon straw, which she sometimes wanted; her only recreation being to fight with cats, and to crawl up the tapestry with which her apartments were hung. Such was the strange destiny of Ferdinand and Isabella's daughter; of the mother of two emperors, and four queens!

1555. increase the revenues, by additional taxes, oppressive to the people. The Duchess de Valentinois was chiefly accused as the cause of these exactions; but, her influence over the king was so far from suffering any diminution, that it appeared to be every year confirmed and extended. Henry, easily led by those whom he loved, seemed only to act according to the impulse of his mistress. She built the superb palace of Anet, to which the two lovers frequently retired, and which was the chief scene of their select pleasures*:

* Anet, which is situated near Dreux, in the Isle of France, upon the river Eure, still exhibits the remains of splendor and elegance. Philibert de Lorme was the architect employed by Henry the second in its construction, and the emblems and devices of the Duchess of Valentinois are visible in every part of the edifice. Voltaire has immortalized it, in these beautiful lines of the ninth Canto of his "Henriade," where Love is described as on his flight to the plain of Ivry.

" Il voit les murs d'Anet, batis aux bords de l'Eure,
 " Lui-même en ordonna la superbe structure ;
 " Par ses adroites Mains, avec art enlacés,
 " Les Chiffres de Diane y sont encore tracés ;
 " Sur sa tombe, en passant, les plaisirs et les graces
 " Repandirent les fleurs qui naissoient sur leurs
 " traces."

while

while the nation, unable to account for an attachment so unusual between persons of such unequal ages, attributed it to sorcery, and supernatural causes. It was reported and believed, that the Duchess wore magical rings, which equally prevented the decay of her own beauty, and of Henry's passion. Catherine of Medicis, credulous herself upon this point, supported and confirmed the popular opinion, which soothed her own vanity, by accounting for her rival's triumph*.

The

* Monsieur de Thou, tho' so judicious and able an historian, was not superior to this weakness, characteristic of the age in which he lived. He very gravely mentions as a fact, the magic powers of which Diana availed herself, to continue, and to support, her ascendancy over Henry.—Brantome, who knew her personally, has given a minute description of her beauty in its most advanced period, which is too curious and extraordinary to be passed over.

“ I saw that lady,” says he, “ only six months before she died : and at that time she was so lovely, “ that the most insensible person could not have looked “ on her without emotion. She was then on her recovery from a severe indisposition, occasioned by a fracture of her leg, which she had broken by a fall from her horse, in riding thro’ the streets of Orleans,

1555. The death of pope Julius the third, and
March. the election of Cardinal Caraffa to the chair
of St. Peter, who assumed the name of Paul
the fourth, gave another aspect to the affairs
of Italy*. The new pontiff, tho' more than
eighty

“ leans. Yet, neither the accident, nor the intense pain
“ which she underwent from it, had in any degree
“ diminished her charms.”

It is true, that Brantome does not absolutely account
for this extraordinary beauty, by any magic influence ;
yet he endeavors to explain the cause of it, by means
somewhat similar.—“ Mais, on dit bien,” adds he,
“ que tous les matins elle usoit de quelques bouillons
“ composez d’or potable, et autres drogues que je ne
“ sçai pas.”—At the period of life when he speaks of
the Duchess in these terms, she was full sixty-five
years old.

* John Marie del Monté, who ascended the ponti-
fical throne by the name of Julius the third, was of a
very inferior extraction, and had been raised to the
purple by Paul the third, in 1536. On the death of
that Pope, Julius was elected his successor, on the 8th
of February, 1550, after long deliberations and in-
trigues in the Conclave,

Tho’ of an intrepid character, and, previous to his
election to the Tiara, even considered as a prelate of
austere manners ; he abandoned himself when Pope, to
every species of voluptuousness and immorality. The
first act of his reign impresses with indignation. It
was

eighty years of age, and of irreproachable ^{1555.} ~~morals~~ previous to his elevation to the holy see ; no sooner attained to his new dignity, than pursuing a line of conduct the reverse of that which he had hitherto observed, he

was to confer his own Cardinal's hat on a young man of the name of Innocent, who being a servant in his family, had the care of an ape ; from which circumstance he was called in derision, the " Cardinal Simia." The sacred college having complained to his Holiness, of the degradation which they suffered, by the introduction of so improper a person into their body ; Julius is said to have replied, " You chose to elect me Pope ; " what merit have you ever discovered in me, to raise " me to so high a dignity ?" — Julius the third, like the greater number of his predecessors in the chair of St. Peter, suffered himself to be altogether governed by his two nephews, John Baptist, and Fabien, de Monté. But, the first of these having been killed before the city of Mirandola, and the latter being of a more tranquil character, the Pope pursued, unrestrained, his passion for pleasures ; immersing himself in debaucheries, equally unbecoming his station, and unfit for his age. His palaces were a scene of intemperance, and of elegance ; where magnificent entertainments, heightened by all that genius and refinement could furnish, continually succeeded each other. Julius hastened his death by these pleasures, which carried him off on the 24th March, 1555, after a short pontificate of five years.

1555. united an unexampled pomp and luxury, to projects of the most irregular ambition. Irritated by his nephews against the emperor, for some pretended misbehaviour of the Imperial generals, he demanded the protection of France; offered the investiture of Naples to the king, and endeavored to negotiate a strict alliance with him for their mutual advantage.

The wisest, and the most disinterested part of the French ministers, instructed by experience, were averse to these dangerous and chimerical propositions. They foresaw only disgrace and national ruin, from the renewal of the antiquated pretensions on the crown of Naples: they knew that no confidence ought to be placed in the honor or good faith of Italian politicians; least of all, in the promises of an aged priest sinking under the weight of infirmities, impotent in mind, irascible, and actuated by two perfidious, as well as violent men, his nephews. They contemplated the state of the kingdom, already exhausted by the long and continual wars with the emperor; while they foresaw future wars, likely to arise against Philip his son and successor.

cessor. Lastly, they remembered the numerous and unfortunate attempts made under three successive reigns, during more than half a century, to gain possession of the Neapolitan crown. These considerations, so truly weighty, ought unquestionably to have prevented the king from forming any political union or connexion with the court of Rome. But, the subserviency of all the members of the cabinet, to the Duke of Guise, and his brother the Cardinal of Lorrain, did not permit Henry to follow this salutary advice. The Cardinal, impetuous and vain, embraced the papal overtures with his accustomed enthusiasm; impelled by the desire of opening a splendid career for the Duke of Guise, by placing him at the head of the army destined against Italy. He was immediately dispatched in person to Rome, with instructions to ratify and conclude the treaty: but, during the Cardinal's absence, by the intervention of Mary, queen of England, who still endeavored to mediate between the powers at war; a truce was signed for five years, between the emperor and France.

1555.

1556.

Feb.

With a view of inducing Henry to rescind

1556. ~~1556.~~ scind the agreement for this suspension of hostilities, and of procuring an immediate renewal of the war, Cardinal Caraffa was dispatched to Paris, as ambassador on the part of his uncle the Pope, with a brilliant train. Repairing to the king at Fontainbleau, after having presented his majesty with a hat and a sword blessed by the sovereign pontiff, he made a magnificent public entry into the capital. Intriguing and artful, he moved every political spring, and availed himself of every means that might facilitate the purpose of his embassy. Catherine of Medicis, and Diana de Poitiers, were both in turn rendered subservient to his views: while flattery, presents, and sacrifices to their vanity, or their ambition, were by turns employed to procure their support. Henry, wavering and irresolute, after long hesitation, in contradiction to the dictates of his own judgment, and not less in violation of every principle of good faith: suffering himself to be borne away by the stream, consented to join the proposed league.

1557. Francis, Duke of Guise, who was appointed to the command of the army, passing the

the mountains, carried with him the flower 1557.
of the French nobility; whom the splendor
of his military character, joined to his reputa-
tion for courtesy, courage, and liberality,
allured to follow his standard. So impru-
dent, nevertheless, did the enterprize appear,
and so little success did it promise, that not
one of the Italian powers could be induced to
afford him the least assistance. The Pope him-
self, tho' he received the French general with March.
every external mark of satisfaction, and af-
fected to celebrate his arrival by public fes-
tivities and honors, yet failed in every essen-
tial article of support; neither the pecuniary
nor military aids being provided, which by
treaty he had solemnly stipulated. Mean-
while, the Duke of Alva, Philip's general, en-
tering the papal territories with an army, ra-
vaged the patrimony of the church; and com-
pelled the Duke of Guise, after an unsuccess-
ful attempt upon the Neapolitan frontiers, to
return to Rome for the protection of his
feeble ally. No progress whatsoever was
made in the plan proposed for the conquest
of the kingdom of Naples; the bait by which
Henry had been allured to undertake so in-
judicious

1557. judicious, as well as unjust an enterprize. Every circumstance seemed to portend an inglorious, if not a ruinous termination to the campaign; when an event equally unexpected and disastrous to France, recalling the Duke of Guise to the defence of the kingdom, fortunately extricated him from so critical and dangerous a situation.

Charles the fifth, who for near half a century had spread terror over all Europe, no longer appeared in person upon the great political theatre; and having retired to a monastery in the province of Estremadura in Spain, was already forgotten while yet alive. Philip the second, his son, less warlike, but not less ambitious than Charles; vigorously assisted by his wife, Mary, queen of England, and desirous on his accession to impress the surrounding states with the idea of his extensive power; assembled a prodigious army on the frontiers of Picardy. But, conscious that he possessed neither the personal bravery, nor the military talents requisite for command; he entrusted that important charge to Emmanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy. The Spanish general, after a number of feints, attacked the

the town of St. Quintin in Picardy ; but Co- 1557.
ligny, who was governor of the province, Aug. 3.
having thrown himself into the place, by his
determined valor preserved it against the ef-
forts of the enemy for a considerable time, tho'
it was otherwise ill calculated for defence.
The Constable, Montmorenci, his uncle,
meanwhile advancing at the head of the
French army, with intent to give him all
the assistance possible, approached St. Quin-
tin: but it was not without surmounting
the greatest impediments, that d'Andelot,
brother to Coligny, found means to enter the
town with five hundred soldiers. This im-
portant service being effected, Montmorenci,
not disposed to risk a general action, at-
tempted to retire at noon-day, in sight of the August
enemy ; tho' they were greatly superior in 10.
numbers, and particularly in cavalry. -

The Duke of Savoy, who perceived the im-
prudence of the attempt, seizing instantly the
occasion which presented itself, charged the
Constable furiously before he had time to
make the necessary disposition, or to draw
up his forces in a proper manner to receive
the attack. The French horse being routed,

were

1557. were thrown into confusion ; but the infantry standing firm, were almost all cut to pieces ; Montmorenci himself, and the Marechal de St. André, with a number of inferior officers, being taken prisoners. Philip, who had not personally contributed, even by his presence in the field, to the acquisition of this important victory ; prevented the decisive effects which it might have produced, by his illiberal jealousy of the Duke of Savoy, or by the inflexible obstinacy of his own character. Instead of marching directly to the capital, which was already in the utmost consternation, and ready to have been deserted at the approach of his victorious army ; he compelled his general to continue the siege of St. Quintin, which Coligny still undauntedly defended for some days, and in which he was at length taken prisoner. The French monarchy, menaced with subversion, was saved by Philip's incapacity to improve his general's victory, added to his own pusillanimous want of energy or of enterprize*.

Nor

* The Duke of Savoy, by a very able and masterly movement, after having appeared to menace the town of

Nor was Henry wanting to himself and his people, in this great emergency, by neglecting

1557.

of Guise, by a forced march invested St. Quintin ; into which Coligny immediately threw himself, with about seven hundred soldiers. Montmorenci, who had taken the command of the French army, advancing up to the suburbs of St. Quintin, attacked the Spanish forces who formed the siege, with so much vigor, that the whole camp was thrown into disorder. The duke of Savoy's tent was overturned by the fire of the artillery : he himself having scarcely time to put on his cuirass, and to retire to the quarters of Count Egmont. A little rivulet, and some marshes, which intersected the ground, unfortunately prevented Montmorenci from profiting in its fullest extent, of the confusion produced in the enemy's camp : and it was with difficulty that d'Andelot found means to enter the city, with a small number of followers.

The Constable then endeavored to retreat ; but Count Egmont, at the head of two thousand cavalry, taking him on one flank ; while the Duke of Brunswic, Count Horn, and Ernest of Mansfeldt, attacked him on the other ; his troops began to give way. The rout commencing among the sutlers and followers of the army, spread from them to the soldiery ; the action having lasted four hours before the French were totally defeated. Only two pieces of cannon were saved, all the others falling into the hands of the enemy ; who lost only about eighty men, while two thousand five hundred

1557. ing any measures that could conduce to the safety of his dominions. Levies of Switzers and

hundred of Montmorenci's troops remained dead upon the field. John of Bourbon, brother to the king of Navarre, and to Louis, prince of Condé, who had several times rallied the troops, and renewed the engagement; was unfortunately shot with a ball from a Harquebusse, while he was still displaying the most undaunted courage, and endeavoring to retrieve the fortune of the day. Being carried into the Spanish camp, he expired in a very few moments. The Constable himself, wounded in the hip, was taken prisoner; as was the Marechal de St. André, the Duke de Longueville, and many others of the first nobility. Louis, prince of Condé, and the duke of Nevers, retreated to La Fere in Picardy.

Philip the second was not personally present in this action, so glorious to the Duke of Savoy. He contented himself with offering up vows to St. Laurence, for his general's success, without having the courage to expose himself to danger; nor did he join his victorious troops till sixteen days after, on the 27th of August, when he arrived in the camp before St. Quintin, with ten thousand English, and as many Flemish soldiers. Coligny deservedly acquired great honor by his obstinate defence of St. Quintin, against this numerous army; and the assault being made at noon-day, he was abandoned by his troops, only a page and four followers remaining with him, when he was taken prisoner.

and Germans were made with all possible expedition: Paris was fortified towards the side of Picardy, by which the enemy might approach: the Duke of Guise was immediately recalled to the defence of France; and even the most pressing solicitations were made to Sultan Solyman, for assistance against the Spaniards. These vigorous efforts were attended with proportionate success. Animated by their sovereign's firmness, and recovering from the first impressions of terror, the Parisians gave the most distinguished proofs of their courage, loyalty, and liberality. The Duke of Guise's arrival from Italy, the lustre of his reputation, and the reliance placed on his great abilities for the extrication of the state, completed the general

soner. D'Andelot, his brother, still continued to defend himself against the Spaniards, till, covered with wounds, and overwhelmed with numbers, he was obliged to surrender. On the following night, he found means to escape.—If Philip had pushed forward instantly towards Paris, after the victory at St. Quintin, the monarchy of France had probably been shaken to it's foundation: but his jealousy of the Duke of Savoy, and his own inaptitude for war, rescued Henry the second from so imminent and alarming a danger.

1557. tranquillity. Philip, who might have imposed conditions on Henry, not less severe than his father Charles had done on Francis the first after the battle of Pavia; derived little advantage from the victory at St. Quintin. During the remainder of the campaign, he made no conquests or acquisitions commensurate to the importance of that decisive engagement. Content with the capture of the three insignificant towns of Ham, Catelet, and Noyon in Picardy, he permitted his troops to retire into winter-quarters.

On the contrary, the Duke of Guise, availing himself of the very circumstance of the severity of the season, had the audacity to project, and the ability to execute, an enterprize, by which, while he covered himself with personal glory, he rendered an inestimable service to France. After having been declared lieutenant-general of the kingdom, within five months from the defeat of St. Quintin he undertook the siege of Calais; a place considered as almost impregnable, and of which the English had been in possession during more than two centuries. The culpable

ble neglect and incapacity of the government under a bigotted princess, which had left the garrison in want of necessaries for their defence ; when added to the vigor with which the attack was followed up, enabled the Duke to make himself master in eight days of a city, 1557. which had cost Edward the third above a year's blockade. It was reserved for the reign of Henry the second, to witness the complete expulsion of their ancient rivals and enemies from every part of the French monarchy ; on the throne of which they had more than once nearly been seated ; and in some part of which they had maintained themselves for near five hundred years. This signal success was followed by the capture of Thionville, in the duchy of Luxembourg : but, as if victory only accompanied the Duke of Guise, the Marechal de Termes, tho' an able and experienced general, was completely routed near Gravelines, by the Spaniards under Count Egmont ; where he himself fell into the hands of the enemy*. Jan. 8. June.

So

* The Marechal de Termes, having taken Dunkirk, laid siege to Gravelines ; but being subject to the gout,

1558. The capture of Calais, in the midst of winter, after so short a siege, raised the popularity

and at that time attacked by a violent fit of the disorder, he left the command of his forces to Estouteville; who relaxing the discipline of the army, permitted his soldiers to quit the camp in great numbers, and to occupy themselves with plundering the peasants. Count Egmont, governor of Flanders, profiting of this misconduct, hastily assembled the garrisons of Aire, St. Omer, and Bethune; to which being added a reinforcement that he received from the Duke of Savoy, they formed a body of twelve thousand infantry, and three thousand cavalry, with which he instantly marched to attack the French. Termes no sooner received the news of the enemy's approach, than he mounted on horseback, notwithstanding his indisposition, and prepared to receive the attack. He took a strong position, his right flank being covered by the sea, his left by the carts of his baggage, and his front protected by eight pieces of artillery. Count Egmont, on the other side, who was totally destitute of any cannon, only following the dictates of his courage, led on his troops, exclaiming, "We are conquerors. Let those who love glory and their country, follow me!" He was, however, repulsed at the first onset, his ranks were thinned by the French artillery, and his own horse was killed under him.

Under these circumstances, at a time when the advantage was nearly equal on both sides, and the victory

pularity of the family of Guise to the highest pitch, and revived the splendor of the Duke's former reputation, when the defender of Metz. As he only, while the state was overwhelmed

1558.

tory more than doubtful on the part of the Count; ten English vessels, whom the noise of the firing had attracted to the coast, decided the fortune of the battle. Having brought their cannon to play on the right wing of the French army, which lay exposed to the fire from the ships; the cavalry, unable to withstand this unexpected and severe attack, flying in confusion, were followed by the infantry. The defeat was entire; fifteen hundred of the French remaining on the field of battle, and a much greater number being massacred by the peasants, in revenge for the sufferings which they had experienced from the depredations of the soldiery. Termes, with several other generals, was made prisoner.

It may not be improper to remark, that Count Egmont, who had been highly instrumental in the defeat of the French at St. Quintin, and to whom alone the glory of the victory at Gravelines was due; terminated his life on a scaffold at Brussels, only ten years afterwards; in 1568, by order of the tyrant Philip the second. His execution is one of the many atrocious acts of severity committed by the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands; which stain the annals of Philip's sanguinary reign.—The emancipation of seven provinces from the yoke of Spain, in some degree revenged and expiated the death of this illustrious person.

1558. with distress, seemed able to command the events of war, and uniformly to attach to himself success; upon him alone the public confidence rested, as the protector of France against her foreign enemies. By a combination of events, all seeming to contribute to the elevation of the Guises; their power was still farther confirmed and extended by an alliance with the heir to the French crown, which took place about this time. Francis, the Dauphin, sensible to the charms of their niece, the young queen of Scotland, who had been sent, after the death of her father James the fifth, to the court of Henry for an asylum; obtained the king's consent to his marriage.

24th
April.

Mary, afterwards so celebrated for her beauty, her talents, and her misfortunes, was at this time in her sixteenth year. Her personal attractions, tho' not yet fully expanded by age, are yet described by all the French historians as almost irresistible. The nuptials, which were solemnized with unusual splendor, at the church of "Notre Dame," were consummated the same day, at the "Palais," amidst the greatest festivities. This union, which promised to render Scotland eventually

eventually a dependency of the French monarchy ; was succeeded by a triumphal entry into the capital, where the Dauphin appeared on horseback, while the young bride was carried in a magnificent litter. Not content with assuming the titles of king and queen of Scotland ; they took, after the death of Mary, queen of England, which happened in the course of the same year, the title and armorial bearings of the English sovereigns. The court of France, engaged in all the entertainments and diversions natural on so auspicious an event, could not foresee the national calamities that impended ; and the Duke of Guise, together with the Cardinal of Lorrain, found themselves at the summit of public consideration and authority.

Two great armies, commanded by their respective sovereigns in person, were again opposed to each other on the approach of summer: Henry and Philip seemed to be on the eve of a decisive engagement; but, mutual fear restraining them from the hazard of a general action, prepared the way for an accommodation. Towards the autumn, by the intervention of the papal Nuncio, and of the Duchess of

1558. ~~October.~~ Lorrain, a negotiation was opened for the conclusion of peace, at the abbey of Cercamp, near Hesdin, in Picardy. The treaty was facilitated and accelerated by the Constable Montmorenci, and the Marechal de St. André; who, weary of their imprisonment, and jealous of being supplanted in the royal favor by the Guises, during their absence from court; made use of the Duke of Savoy's interposition, to incline Philip to terms of pacification. The Constable having with that design previously requested and obtained permission to repair to Henry in person at Amiens, was received with testimonies of the warmest affection by his master. The king, in compliance with the manners of an age, which knew none of the delicacies of a more refined stage of society; carried his condescension and attachment towards his ancient favorite so far, as even to make him sleep in his own bed.

From the number of great contending interests, which it was necessary to reconcile, the completion of peace, might nevertheless have been long and difficult, if the death of Mary, queen of England, which took place during

1558.
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1559.  
Jan.

during the course of the negotiation, had not removed the principal obstacle. Philip, liberated by her decease from the ties which had connected him with that country, no longer maintained with the same ardor, the interests of her successor Elizabeth ; nor insisted, as he had previously done, on the absolute restitution of Calais. After several conferences held at Cercamp, the preliminaries were finally adjusted, and signed at Cateau in the province of Cambresis. All the conquests made by the French arms, during the late or present reign, in the Low Countries, Piedmont, Tuscany, and Corsica, were ceded, in order to procure from Spain the restitution of Ham, Catelet, and Noyon, three inconsiderable towns in Picardy : but, in recompense for these numerous restitutions, Calais, Metz, Toul, and Verdun, remained to France. The entire expulsion of the English from the kingdom, on one hand ; and the protection afforded by Metz, Toul, and Verdun, to the French frontier on the side of Germany ; might nevertheless perhaps be esteemed in the eye of true policy, as more than an equivalent for all the cessions made by Henry. In order to cement the articles of peace

1559. peace by the bonds of personal union, the  
princess Margaret, sister to the king, was  
affianced to the Duke of Savoy\*; and the  
hand

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\* Margaret of France, daughter of Francis the first, was born in 1523. Her person was not only beautiful; but she possessed many of the most engaging and amiable qualities of the king her father, as well as all the elegance of mind by which he was peculiarly characterized. After his death, she continued that protection and liberality to men of genius, which had acquired Francis so high a reputation over all Europe. Her marriage with Emanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy, was consummated in the last moments of the life and reign of her brother, Henry the second; the princess being then thirty-six years of age. She was beloved as well as revered by her subjects, who called her the mother of her people. On the return of her nephew, Henry the third, from Poland into France, in 1574, she received him at Turin; and is said to have given him some excellent counsels for his conduct, of which Henry, for his own misfortune, did not avail himself. The anxiety and earnestness which she felt to entertain the king and his train during their stay in her capital, when added to the exertions which she made to render his residence in Turin agreeable; threw her into a pleurisy, of which she died on the 14th of September, 1574, during the absence of the duke her husband, who had attended the king of France to Lyons, on his entering his own dominions. Few princesses have been  
more

hand of Elizabeth, Henry's eldest daughter, which had been previously destined for Don Carlos, Philip's only son ; being withdrawn from that unfortunate prince, was bestowed on the king of Spain himself, who was recently become a widower by the death of the queen of England \*.

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more generally regretted ; and her memory was immortalized by the poets, to whom she had extended her munificent patronage.

\* Elizabeth of France, daughter of Henry the second and Catherine of Medicis, was born at Fontainbleau, in April, 1545, and had been originally intended for Edward the sixth of England : a marriage which was prevented by the premature death of that prince. She was then destined for Don Carlos, son of Philip the second, and heir to the Spanish monarchy. But, the critical decease of Mary, queen of England, during the negotiations which preceded the treaty of Cambresis, leaving Philip free, he demanded the young princess in marriage for himself. The nuptials were solemnized by proxy, at the church of "Notre Dame," only a few days before the catastrophe of Henry the second's death. She was named "Elizabeth de la Paix," because she formed the cement of the great pacification between France and Spain : but never was any matrimonial union more unfortunate.

Almost all the contemporary historians agree in asserting,

1559. The terms of the treaty of Cateau, which were considered as not less disgraceful to France,

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serting; that Don Carlos never forgave his father for having thus deprived him of his intended bride. They even either insinuate or declare, that the young queen was tenderly attached to the prince during her whole life; tho' they expressly deny her having ever been capable, or guilty, of any criminal weakness. In 1565, Elizabeth was conducted by the Duke of Alva, from Madrid to Bayonne, where an interview took place between the queen of Spain and her brother, Charles the ninth; who was accompanied by their mother, Catherine of Medicis.

The history and lamentable fate of Don Carlos are too well known, to need recital. That unhappy prince expired on the 24th of July, 1568: bat; whether by a natural, or a violent death; is more matter of conjecture and suspicion, than of certainty. It is commonly believed, tho' without any proof, that Philip the second caused him to be privately executed; or poisoned; and it has been asserted, perhaps falsely, that jealousy of his son's attachment to the queen, hastened, if it did not produce this unnatural order. It is certain that Elizabeth was much affected by the misfortunes and death of Don Carlos; whom she only survived about ten weeks: she died in child-bed at Madrid, on the 3d of October, 1568, not without strong suspicions of poison, and greatly regretted by all orders of people. Brantôme says, “*On parle fort sinistrement de sa mort.*”

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France, than those which Francis the first had signed at Crespy, with Charles the fifth ; excited equal murmurs thro'out the nation, To the Constable Montmorenci they were principally attributed ; who, from self-interested motives, and the desire of obtaining his freedom, was believed to have advised the king to accept of such inadequate conditions. The Guises even presumed openly to arraign the treaty, as unbecoming the national honor, and depriving the kingdom of the conquests acquired during thirty years, in Savoy, Piedmont, and the Netherlands. These reclamations were nevertheless ineffectual ; and

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De Thou, and the Abbé de St. Real, likewise insinuate that her death was accelerated by unnatural means : it must be confessed, that the unrelenting, gloomy character of Philip, too much strengthens the suspicion. Elizabeth was beautiful in her person, and amiable in her manners to the highest degree. By her husband she left two daughters, of whom the eldest was the celebrated Infanta, Clara-Eugenia, married to the Archduke Albert ; and in her own person, governess of the Low Countries for a number of years : she was the favorite child of Philip the second. The youngest daughter, Catherine, was married to Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy.

Henry,

1559. Henry, notwithstanding every remonstrance, adhered immovably to his resolution of terminating the war. He was impelled to that determination in no small degree, by the internal state of his dominions, which demanded equal energy and ability to administer under their actual circumstances.

During the reign of Francis the first, and still more so since his decease, the reformed religion had made a most alarming and universal progress. All ranks of people having imbibed the new doctrines, persecution unhappily hastened and promoted their influence. Even among the highest class of the nobility, there were not wanting proselytes to the tenets of Luther and of Calvin. D'Andelot, nephew to the Constable, and brother to Coligny, was justly suspected, and even accused, of being a convert to these opinions. Henry, animated by that intolerant spirit which characterized the age, and desirous to satisfy himself of the truth or falsehood of the imputation; with the zeal of a theologian, questioned him personally on his sentiments respecting the Mass. D'Andelot, without shrinking from an inquiry so severe, did not hesitate

hesitate to avow his adherence to the reformed religion: a confession which so irritated the king, that he was with difficulty restrained from putting d'Andelot to death with his own hand. It required the exertions of all Montmorenci's interest, to procure his pardon, and his restitution to the post which he held, of general of the French infantry \*. In order

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\* The king having ordered the Cardinal de Chatillon, brother of d'Andelot, and who himself afterwards openly renounced the Catholic religion, tho' he retained his ecclesiastical dignity and the purple; to bring d'Andelot into his presence, determined to question him in person relative to his religious opinions. The accused nobleman having presented himself at the king's dinner, while the court was at Monceaux, Henry interrogated him on the subject of the Eucharist. D'Andelot not only avowing his belief in the doctrines of Calvin, but peremptorily refusing to retract his opinion; Henry was inflamed to such a degree of resentment, that taking up a plate with intent to dash it against the ground, he wounded the Dauphin, who sat by him at table. He instantly ordered the Sieur de la Bourdasiere to take d'Andelot into arrest, and to conduct him to Meaux; from whence, after some time, he was transferred to the castle of Melun. Blaise de Montluc, to whom his office was tendered, refused nevertheless to accept it, from his apprehension of incurring the indignation

1559. order to check the further progress of heresy, it was resolved by Henry to adopt measures of the most inquisitorial nature, and the severest penalties were denounced against its professors. Several members of the parliament of Paris having presumed to declare against the rigor of the punishments, to which by law the Protestants were made liable, and which were put June 10. into execution against them ; the king himself in person repaired to the hall where they held their sittings. He there ordered five of the most refractory members, at the head of whom was du Bourg, to be arrested and carried to the Bastile immediately, who had boldly avowed that sentiment in his presence. Orders were issued for their instant and vigorous prosecution.

These scenes of intolerance, common by turns to every European state in that age ; were succeeded by exhibitions of gallantry and pomp, to which they formed an extraordinary contrast. With the return of peace,

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nation of the family of Montmorenci, to whom d'Andelot was very nearly allied by blood. The Constable's intercession, joined to d'Andelot's submission, procured him a restoration to his military rank and charge.

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every species of luxury and dissipation re- 1559.  
vived. Henry's court, the most polished of any in Europe, was rendered unusually splen-  
did by the different entertainments, given on occasion of the marriage of the princess Eli-  
zabeth to Philip the second, which was cele-  
brated by proxy at Paris. Tournaments, a June 27.  
species of diversion in which the king parti-  
cularly excelled, constituted an important part of these amusements. The Duke of Savoy,  
Emanuel Philibert, arriving about the same time at Paris, for the purpose of accomplishing his nuptials with the princess Margaret, the king's sister; was accompanied by the Duke of Brunswick, the Prince of Orange, and a hundred gentlemen, in his train. They were received with every demonstration of respect and attention by Henry, who met and embraced the Duke of Savoy, at the foot of the great stair-case of the Louvre. This incident gave new animation to the festivities; which it was impossible to foresee would be almost immediately interrupted, by the trag-  
ical catastrophe of the king's death.

On that memorable occasion, the lists ex-

1559. tended from the palace of the Tournelles to the Bastile, across the street St. Antoine, in the most central part of the metropolis; and Henry himself had broken several lances with different lords of the court, in all which he had June 30. shewn unusual vigor and address. It being the third day of the tournaments, he publicly wore, notwithstanding the presence of the queen his wife, the colors assumed by the Duchess of Valentinois; in compliance with the usages of chivalry, which in this instance were certainly at variance with the laws of decorum, no less than of morals. Those colors were black and white, in allusion to his Mistress's state of widowhood. Towards the close of the evening, and previous to the conclusion of the tournament, Henry expressed a strong inclination to try his strength against the Count de Montgomeri, captain in his life-guards. Son to that Seigneur de Lorges, who, by a singular fatality, had formerly wounded Francis the first so dangerously on the head, at Romorentin in Berri; Montgomeri descended from an illustrious family of Scotland, and was distinguished for his superior activity

activity in these combats, above any nobleman of the kingdom\*. Catherine of Medicis, as if by a secret presage of the event, besought

1559.

\* Gabriel de Lorges, Count de Montgomeri, was captain of the Scotch guards to Henry the second. Brave and active in the highest degree, he had been sent by Francis the first, in 1545, into Scotland, to command the troops which were then dispatched to the assistance of the queen regent, Mary of Guise. The death of Henry the second, however tragical, certainly cannot be imputed as a crime to Montgomeri ; he having urgently entreated of the king, tho' in vain, to excuse him from giving the fatal proof of his dexterity which took place. It has even been pretended, tho' probably without reason, that Henry, before he breathed his last, expressly enjoined that Montgomeri should not be prosecuted or molested, for having been innocently and unintentionally the author of his death. The best French authors agree in asserting, that the king, tho' he continued to breathe for eleven days after the accident, never recovered either his speech or his intellects. It is plain however, that Montgomeri conceived himself to be in personal danger ; for he immediately retired into England, and having embraced the doctrines of the reformation, returned into France at the commencement of the civil wars, under Charles the ninth.

Brantome describes him, as addicted to gaming and pleasures in the most immoderate degree, but equally intrepid and active whenever occasion called. His own

1559. besought the king not to re-enter the lists, but he resisted her solicitations ; adding, that he would break one more lance in her honor. Montgomeri himself accepted the challenge with extreme reluctance, after having endeavored, by every argument and entreaty, to prevail on his sovereign to excuse him ; but without effect. Henry commanded him to obey, and, as is asserted, even fought with his vizor raised, thereby still more exposing his face. The shock was rude on both sides ; but the Count's lance breaking against the king's helmet, he attacked Henry with the

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words are vastly characteristic and amusing, from their plainness and simplicity : " C'etoit," says Brantome, " le plus nonchalant en sa charge, et aussi peu soucieux qu'il etoit possible ; car il aimoit fort ses aises, " et le jeu : mais, lorsque il avoit une fois le cul sur la " selle, c'etoit le plus vaillant et soigneux capitaine " qu'on eut seu voir ; au reste, si brave et vaillant, " qu'il assailloit tout, foible ou fort, qui se presentat " devant lui." His defence of Rouen, in 1562, against the royal army ; and his escape, after having exhausted all the resources of the most desperate bravery, in a boat, with which he broke thro' the chains stretched across the river Seine, at Caudebec ; raised his reputation to the highest point. His death, and the circumstances of it, will be mentioned hereafter.

stump,

stump, which remained in his hand. It entered under the eyebrow of his right eye; and the blow was so violent, as not only to throw him to the ground, but to deprive him instantly both of his speech and understanding, which he never more recovered, though he survived the accident near eleven days. The queen ordered him to be conveyed immediately to the palace of the Tournelles: every assistance of art was procured for him, and the divine mercy was implored by processions and public prayers; but the wound was beyond a cure, and he at length expired, having only passed his fortieth year, about four months\*.

July 10.

Conster-

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\* Authors are not absolutely agreed whether the king fought with his vizor raised, or whether it flew open with the blow received from Montgomeri's lance.—Luc Gauric, a famous astrologer of the time, is pretended by de Thou, to have foretold the manner and circumstances of the king's death; but unfortunately, Gauric's prediction is found in Gassendi; and expressly asserts, that “if Henry could surmount the dangers “ with which he was menaced in his sixty-third and “ sixty-fourth year, he would survive, and enjoy great “ happiness till the age of sixty-nine years and ten

1559. An event, at once so tragical, and so impossible to have been either foreseen, or expected; produced effects of the most extensive, as well as deplorable nature to the state. We are lost in the calculation of

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“months.”—Mezerai likewise relates that Charles, Duke of Lorrain, who was son-in-law to Henry the second, he having married the princess Claude, that king’s daughter; was accustomed publicly and solemnly to declare, that, “while he was at Paris, during the “festivities and tournaments which preceded the “king’s death, on the night before that melancholy “event; a lady who was lodged in his own palace, “near the Bastile, saw in a dream, the king thrown “to the ground by a blow from a lance in his eye; a “splinter of which struck the Dauphin by rebound “in the ear, and extended him breathless near the “dead body of his father.”—These dreams and predictions, carry with them either so much folly, or so much falsity; and this story is so evidently invented after Francis the second’s death, as to become matters of contempt and ridicule in an enlightened age. No sooner had Philip the second received intelligence of Henry’s accident and desperate situation, than he dispatched André Vesal, his own surgeon, from Brussels to Paris, to attend on, and to exert his skill for the recovery of the expiring prince: but all his efforts were fruitless; an incurable abscess having formed itself in the king’s brain, of which he died on the 10th of July, 1559.

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the evils and misfortunes which overwhelmed the French nation, and had nearly subverted the crown, in consequence of Henry's violent death. Perhaps modern history can produce nothing to be put in competition with it, in this point of view. Even the assassination of Henry the fourth by Rayailiac, tho' a calamity of the first magnitude, did not plunge the kingdom into immediate civil war; nor eventually give birth to massacres still more atrocious. The more we contemplate the astonishing catastrophe produced by the stroke of Montgomeri's lance, the more we are swallowed up in astonishment; followed by sentiments of submission and resignation to that unseen power, which disposes of the destiny of men, and regulates them by laws inscrutable to us.

Meanwhile, consternation, mingled with intrigue and artifice, divided the court, of which the queen became in some measure the head, tho' not invested with the regency. The various contending factions, led by chiefs of distinguished capacity, whom the late king's vigor had kept in subjection; now liberated from restraint, declared their re-

1559. ~~July 9.~~ spective pretensions without disguise. The Duke of Savoy, finding the king's recovery desperate, solicited so pressingly the completion of his marriage with the princess Margaret, that it was celebrated at "Notre-Dame," without any pomp, and in the greatest privacy. The Duchess de Valentinois, who during twelve years, ever since Henry's accession, might be said to have governed France; received an order from the queen, intimating that she might retire to her own house, and not presume to enter the chamber of the dying king; which command she obeyed. This mandate was followed by a second message from Catherine, enjoining her to deliver up the jewels of the crown, and other rich effects then in her possession. She inquired if Henry was dead; and the messenger having replied, that he yet breathed, but could not possibly remain long alive: "Know," said Diana, with undaunted intrepidity, "that so long as he shall retain the least appearance of life, I neither fear my enemies, however powerful, nor will shew any deference to their menaces or commands. Carry this answer back to the

“ the queen.” It is difficult to say whether the dignity of the reply excites most admiration ; or its audacity, more astonishment.

If Henry was not a great, he was an amiable and accomplished prince. Generous to his domestics, bounteous to his followers, he was beloved by his courtiers and attendants. His conversation was entertaining, and lively ; his manner of expression, flowing and graceful. An affectionate father, a polite and decent husband, a warm and animated friend ; he was, in all the walks of private life, peculiarly an object of respect and attachment. Neither destitute of capacity nor of firmness, tho’ governed by his mistress, and subservient to his favorites ; he could exert himself on important occasions, and enforce obedience. Fond of polite literature, as from hereditary right, he encouraged it in his court, where it made a rapid progress. In the prime of life, and with such qualities, his death must at any time have been considered as a loss to his kingdom ; but in the critical juncture when he expired, it was a calamity of the most afflicting nature, immediately followed by massacres, crimes, and insurrection.

1559.

1559. tion. The vigor of his government, and the presence of the sovereign, could alone repress the enthusiastic spirit and intemperate zeal, which characterized the followers of the reformed religion. He only could impose limits on the intriguing genius of Catherine of Medicis, and set bounds to the wild ambition of the princes of the family of Guise. His untimely end withdrew this salutary controul; and the succeeding circumstances which took place under the reigns of his three sons, opened the avenues to every source of public evil or misfortunes.

By the queen he left four sons, and three daughters, all of whom will be frequently mentioned hereafter. He never had any children by the Duchess de Valentinois; but, besides Diana, married to the Duke of Castro, of whom mention has been already made; he left a natural son by a Scottish lady, named Henry d'Angoulesme, who became grand Prior of France, governor of Provence, and admiral of the Levant seas\*.

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\* The name of this mistress of Henry the second, is said to have been Fleming: she was in the service of Mary,

We are now about to enter on a melancholy period of the French history. Wars <sup>1559.</sup> ~~of~~

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Mary, queen of Scotland, whom she had accompanied from her own country into France. Yet, others of the contemporary writers call her “Mademoiselle de Lewiston,” and pretend that she was related to Mary by blood. But she was unquestionably a Scottish woman. They add, that motives of policy and court intrigue originally produced the connexion between this lady and the king. The Guises, jealous of the ascendant which Diana de Poitiers had obtained and preserved over him, determined to detach him from her; as they found that she no longer treated them with her accustomed confidence, and that Montmorenci had supplanted them in her affections. To this end, they artfully praised “Mademoiselle de Lewiston,” and extolled her beauty greatly to Henry, who soon after saw, and became sensible to her charms. She did not scruple to gratify his passion; but their intimacy was concealed, even after she had brought him a son, with the utmost care, in order to prevent its being known to the Duchess de Valentinois.

Henry d'Angoulesme, her son, was a generous, brave, and accomplished prince, tho' unhappily led, by the prejudices and violence of the times, to be particularly active in the massacre of St. Bartholomew.— His death, which was tragical and singular, happened at Aix in Provence, on the second of June, 1588. Philip Altoviti, Baron de Castelane, was his mortal enemy:

1559. of religion, far more sanguinary, cruel, and ruinous to the kingdom, than even those caused by the claims of Henry the fifth and Edward the third ; follow in succession under the three last princes of the race of Valois. The brilliant reigns of Francis and Henry, which we have just reviewed ; the animating contests for glory or territory, maintained with Charles the fifth and Philip the second ; are about to be succeeded by intestine confusion, revolt, and rebellion. The kingdom, over-run by foreign auxiliaries, and desolated by its own subjects, becomes a scene of universal contention. Catherine of Medicis, who had hitherto remained in obscurity,

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enemy : Henry having entered his house, and having reproached the Baron with many acts of malignant hatred towards him ; at length proceeded to such lengths of violence, as to pass his sword thro' Castelnau's body. Altoviti expiring, had yet sufficient force to snatch a poniard from the head of the bed on which he fell, with which he stabbed Henry in the belly. The prince did not apprehend his wound to be mortal : but the friar who confessed him, informing him of his danger ; he replied, without emotion, “ Il “ ne faut plus penser à vivre ? Eh bien, pensons donc “ à mourir !”—He died twenty-four hours afterwards.

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emerging from the restraint under which she had been held ; in order to perpetuate her own power, embroils all parties. The spirit of civil discord and of religious frenzy almost extinguishes for the time, every sentiment of humanity or patriotism : till at length, in the person of Henry the fourth, a prince, descended from the ancient kings of France, appears ; and, as if sent by Providence to heal the wounds of the state, restores peace, and diffuses felicity.

1559.  
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CHAP. IX.

State of the kingdom at the death of Henry the second.—Character of the Duke of Guise—of the Cardinal of Lorrain—of the king of Navarre—of the prince of Condé.—Catherine of Medicis.—Her character, person, and political conduct.—Disgrace of the Duchess of Valentinois.—Accession of Francis the second.—Power of the Guises.—The king's ill health.—Assassination of Minard.—Conspiracy of Amboise, and its defeat.—Executions.—The prince of Condé suspected.—Convocation of Fontainbleau.—Arrival of the king of Navarre and prince of Condé at court.—They are arrested.—Trial of the latter prince.—Francis's illness.—Condemnation of the prince of Condé.—Intrigues and cabals of Catherine of Medicis.—Death of Francis the second.—Circumstances.—Character.—Funeral.—Arrival of Montmorenci.—Release of Condé.

1559. PREVIOUS to our entering upon this
 short, but unfortunate reign, which first gave birth to the wars of religion in France; it may be requisite to take a view of the principal

cipal personages who will appear upon the scene, and to contemplate the elements of future misfortunes in some measure yet latent, or only unfolding in part their principles of destruction. The unforeseen catastrophe of Henry the second's death called out these principles into action, which might otherwise have remained in tranquillity. That superior and coercive authority being suddenly removed, that had hitherto over-ruled the many discordant spirits with which the court was filled; a tumultuous administration succeeded, precarious in its basis, uncertain in its duration, and only supported by an extraordinary exertion of severity, or circumspection.

In the confusion consequent upon the de- July, cease of the late king, the Guises, profiting of the occasion, had gained possession of the person of Francis the second, the young sovereign. If their near alliance by blood to the queen, Mary of Scotland, afforded them a plausible pretext to justify their conduct; the great endowments of the two brothers, Francis, Duke of Guise, and the Cardinal of Lorrain, seemed to render them qualified for filling the first employments of the state.

The

1559. The Duke possessed in an eminent degree all those qualities, which are formed to procure an ascendancy over mankind. Liberal to a degree of munificence, courteous even to condescension in his manners and address, he captivated the people ; while his military reputation procured him the adherence of the soldiery, and the attachment of the bravest officers, who regarded themselves as certain of success under his command. Naturally moderate in his character, and averse to cruelty, he nevertheless zealously maintained the ancient worship, and opposed every religious innovation. Intrepid in the article of danger, either personal or political, which he surveyed without trouble or apprehension, he always applied the most instant and efficacious remedies. Conscious of his own capacity for government, favored by the peculiar circumstances of the times, and hurried away by his thirst of power, he set no limits to his ambition *.

Talents

* Francis, Duke of Guise, was unquestionably, one of the most elevated and extraordinary characters which appeared in the sixteenth century. He was born at the castle of Bar in Lorrain, on the seventeenth of

Talents of an opposite nature, but, perhaps, not less calculated to seduce the human mind, characterized his brother the Cardinal. Endowed with the gift of eloquence, and animated with unbounded zeal in the cause of the catholic religion; he was venerated by the established clergy, as the guardian of the ecclesiastical immunities and privileges. In

of February, 1545. In 1545 he was wounded by a lance near the eye, at the siege of Boulogne; which, from the scar that it left on his face, procured him the surname of "Balafré." His defence of Metz in 1553, against Charles the fifth, and still more, his clemency and humanity towards the Imperial soldiers who fell into his hands, on the emperor's retreat from before the place, acquired him an immortal reputation. Victory appeared to accompany him wherever he moved; and the recovery of Calais from the English, endeared him deservedly to all France. It is to be lamented that the death of Henry the second, the relation in which he stood to the successor, by the marriage of Mary of Scotland, his niece, to that prince, and the feeble character of Francis the second himself, opened to the Duke of Guise a career for his ambition, too alluring to be resisted by a man who felt his capacity. Yet even prejudice must confess, that he possessed qualities worthy of government; and such as, if the circumstances of the times had permitted, might have been as beneficial to his adopted country, as they were glorious to himself.

1559. ~~ferior~~ to the Duke in clemency and personal courage, he was still more enterprizing and presumptuous: but, elated even to arrogance by success, he sunk into pusillanimity when oppressed by adverse fortune. Violent, as well as vindictive, he could neither restrain, nor dissemble his feelings: dissolute, and fond of pleasure, he gave offence by the libertinism of his manners. Greedy of power, rapacious of wealth, and sacrificing every consideration of private tenderness or affection, to the dictates of an interested policy; he knew no motives, and pursued no objects, except those which tended to the elevation of himself and his family.

Anthony of Bourbon, titular king of Navarre, first prince of the blood, was ill calculated to oppose these aspiring and turbulent spirits. Of a temper gentle, humane, and flexible, nature seemed to have designed him for times of tranquillity. Equal to the Duke of Guise only in personal bravery, he was far beneath him in every other point of competition. Politically timid and irresolute, he was destitute of that decision, so indispensable in great emergencies. Fluctuating in perpetual

ual uncertainty between the two religions, ^{1559.} ~~he~~ he neither could be deemed a Catholic, nor a Hugonot: yet naturally voluptuous, and fond of pleasure, he was easily induced to sacrifice the ties of policy, to the weakness of private inclination.

His brother Louis, prince of Condé, was cast by nature in a very different mold. His person, which was little and ungraceful, enclosed an elevated and intrepid mind. Amorous from disposition, and of persuasive address, he received from the other sex the most unbounded proofs of their affection. Of determined courage, he was formed for camps, not less than for courts. Limited in his fortune, which was extremely circumscribed, he nevertheless possessed the liberality becoming his high birth. Professing with zeal the doctrines of Calvin, but little inclined to the rigorous manners inculcated by the followers of the Reformation; he made religion the pretext for engaging in those wars, which ambition and his hatred to the Guises really produced. Not inferior to the celebrated Constable of Bourbon in the arts of retaining a licentious soldiery in subjection, nature had

1559. qualified him to command armies, and inspired him with a passion for military glory. With qualities such as these, he formed an unequal antagonist to the Duke of Guise; whom he ever considered as his mortal enemy, and boldly opposed on all occasions*.

The Constable Montmorenci, far advanced

* Louis of Bourbon, prince of Condé, the seventh son of Charles, Duke of Vendome, was born on the 7th of May, 1520. He early distinguished himself in the field, under the reign of Henry the second, having made his first campaign with that prince, when he laid siege to Boulogne. In 1552, having thrown himself into Metz, he contributed to the glory which the Duke of Guise acquired, by his repulse of the emperor from before that city. At the unfortunate battle of St. Quintin, where Montmorenci was taken prisoner, and the French army was totally defeated; the prince of Condé, then only twenty-seven years of age, after distinguishing his courage during the action, rallied the flying troops at la Fere, in Picardy.

Having imbibed the religious opinions of the reformers, before the death of Henry the second; the tumultuous times which followed under Francis the second, and Charles the ninth, rendered the prince of Condé too distinguished. He was eventually involved in rebellion, which terminated in his premature and tragical end. He will be much mentioned in the present, and succeeding reigns.

in years, long accustomed to occupy the first post of state, and too haughty to condescend to fill an inferior situation, did not at once declare for either faction. But, the pressing instances of Henry d'Amville, his second son, whose ascendancy over his mind was great; joined to his aversion for the reformed religion, induced him at length, reluctantly, to unite himself with the princes of the family of Lorrain.

The Marechal de St. André, one of the most accomplished noblemen of the court, brave, polite, and elegant, but immoderately addicted to pleasures, and of a ruined fortune; ranging himself under the same banner, devoted his services implicitly to the Duke of Guise*. On the contrary, Coligny,

and

* Jacques d'Albon, commonly known in history by the name of the Marechal de St. André, was one of the most distinguished favorites of Henry the second, who loaded him with dignities and preferments: his bravery, his magnificence of disposition, and the insinuation of his manners, peculiarly calculated him to succeed in courts. As early as the battle of Cerizoles, under Francis the first, in 1544, he had acquired a high reputation for intrepidity: and he had been pre-

1559. and d'Andelot his brother, who were both of them avowed proselytes to Calvinism; embraced the party of the princes of the blood, and adhered to it invariably.

Catherine of Medicis, whom we have so long seen obscured by the superior influence of the two successive mistresses of Francis and Henry, now for the first time rose into political importance. Her rank, as mother to the young king, made her friendship eagerly sought after by every party; while her talents and capacity rendered her equal to, and capable of, the most arduous employ-

sent in every action of danger, during the war which took place between Charles the fifth and Henry the second. He received the garter from the young king of England, Edward the sixth, to whom he had been sent with the order of St. Michael. At St. Quintin he was made prisoner, together with the Constable Montmorenci.—Under the reign of Francis the second, and in the first years of Charles the ninth, he acted a distinguished part in the unhappy scenes which desolated and laid waste the kingdom. Voltaire seems to have conceived more meanly of his talents, than perhaps they merited: he calls St. André the “Lepidus “ of the Triumvirate” which was formed under Charles the ninth, between the Duke of Guise, Montmorenci, and that nobleman.

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ments of state. Of a character too complicated, and containing movements too intricate for ordinary delineation, it is difficult to pourtray the various features that composed her mind.

1559.

Endowed by nature with a variety of eminent qualities, which might have conduced to the welfare of mankind, she wanted virtue to direct them to honorable and salutary purposes. Fond of pleasure, of letters, of magnificence, these were nevertheless only inferior affections: ambition, which predominated, swallowed up all other passions in her bosom. Possessed of an equanimity of temper and composure, which might have done honor to the firmest man, she seemed to look down as from an eminence, on human occurrences. Never alarmed, even in circumstances the most unexpected and distressful, she knew either how to oppose and to surmount them; or, if necessary, how to bend and accommodate herself to them. Mistress of consummate dissimulation, her manners, where she wished to succeed in any attempt, were ingratiating beyond the common powers of female seduction. Sprung from the family

1559. of the Medicis, the revivers of the arts in Italy; and emulous of the fame which Francis the first had acquired by his protection of learning; she cultivated poetry and all the gentler occupations, while surrounded with the horrors of civil war; and extended her generosity to men of genius, even in the most exhausted state of the finances. Expensive even to prodigality, in the entertainments and diversions which she exhibited, and covering her deepest designs under the mask of dissipation; she planned a massacre, during the festivity of a banquet, and caressed with the most winning blandishments, the victim which she had previously destined to destruction. Cruel from policy, not from temper; avaricious from necessity, profuse from taste; she united in herself qualities the most discordant and contradictory that ever met in woman*.

Her

Catherine of Medicis, so celebrated in the annals of France, and of all Europe, was the daughter of Lorenzo de Medicis, Duke of Urbino, and of Magdelaine de la Tour d'Auvergne. She was born at Florence, on the 13th of April, 1519; and during her childhood was exposed to the utmost hazards, from the animosity of

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Her figure, which was majestic, corresponded with her rank ; the beauty of her counte- 1559.

the Florentines to the house of Medicis, who had been expelled from that city by the opposite faction. Not content with depriving the young princess of all the possessions of her family, they confined her at nine years of age, in a monastery. During the famous siege of Florence, in 1520, Baptista Cei, one of the most violent opponents of the Medicis, carried his detestation and barbarity to such a length, as to propose to place Catherine upon the walls of the city, between two battlements, where she would have been exposed to the whole fire of the Imperial artillery. Bernard Castiglioné even advised in the council, a more brutal species of vengeance ; that of submitting her to the prostitution and violence of the soldiery : but these cruel propositions were received with horror, and immediately rejected.

Philip, prince of Orange, who commanded at that time the army of Charles the fifth, encamped before Florence, aspired to Catherine's hand. The proposition was displeasing to Pope Clement the seventh, her uncle, who had already entertained higher views for his niece : but the prince of Orange would nevertheless have succeeded in his demand of the princess, if the death of that illustrious commander, which took place previous to the surrender of the city, had not liberated the Pontiff, and left Catherine at liberty. John Stuart, Duke of Albany, who had married Anne de

1559. countenance being blended with dignity. Knowing how to improve her natural attractions by all the aids of dress, she carried her magnificence on this article to a prodigious length: nor were the charms of her person fugitive and frail, but accompanied her even into age, and hardly quitted her at a very advanced period of life*. With such endowments,

de la Tour, sister to the Duchess of Urbino; negotiated on the part of Francis the first, the alliance between the young princess, and Henry, Duke of Orleans, which was consummated at Marseilles with so much magnificence, in October, 1533.

* Her complexion was unusually fair, her eyes large, full of vivacity and fire. She had, when young, a very fine shape; but grew afterwards large and corpulent. Her head was disproportionately big; nor could she walk any considerable distance, without being subject to an attack of dizziness. The extreme symmetry and admirable shape of her legs, made her take a particular pleasure in wearing silk stockings drawn very tight, the use of which were first introduced in her time. A desire of shewing them more conspicuously, induced her likewise to change the female mode of riding on horseback, which antecedently was by resting the feet on a small board, to that of placing one leg upon the pommel of the saddle.—Catherine piqued herself on the address with which she rode: and tho'

ments, intellectual and personal, it may rather excite surprize that she should so long have remained without power or influence; than that she should, after the death of Henry the second, have acted so distinguished a part in the history of France.

While Henry, mortally wounded, lay expiring in the palace of the Tournelles; Catherine, tho' in appearance agitated with the deepest sorrow, yet foreseeing the natural consequences of her son's accession; was wholly occupied with the consideration of those measures, which it would be proper for her to embrace in so critical an emergency. Greatly as she dreaded the capacity, the ambition,

in consequence of her boldness in hunting, she once broke her leg; and at another time received so severe a blow on the head, as to be obliged to undergo the operation of the trepan; she continued this exercise to her sixtieth year. Her hands and arms are said to have excelled those of any lady of the court, both as to form and delicacy. All habits became her, from the taste with which she adjusted every ornament to her figure; and her wardrobe, like that of Elizabeth, queen of England, was equally varied and splendid. Her neck and breast were of the most dazzling whiteness; Brantome speaks of them with enthusiastic complacency.

and

1559. and the influence of the Guises ; yet the Constable Montmorenci was more personally obnoxious to her. He had not only united himself by close and recent ties, with the Duchess de Valentinois ; but he had likewise started suspicions the most injurious to her honor and nuptial fidelity, by asserting, that of all the children which she had brought the late king her husband, not one resembled him*. On the contrary, the princes of Lorraine,

* Davila, with his usual accuracy, assigns several reasons for Catherine's dislike to the Constable. He had originally endeavoured to induce Henry, when Dauphin, to repudiate her, on account of sterility : and when that pretext had ceased, by her having brought him children, Montmorenci threw indirect, if not open reflections, on her fidelity to her husband, by declaring, that "of all his issue, only Diana, his natural daughter, resembled Henry." Besides these personal and wounding insults, the Constable had uniformly persecuted all the Florentines, who from connexions of blood, or of country, had followed Catherine into France, or who had endeavored to gain promotion in her court. All these mortifications, says Davila, the queen bore in silence during her husband's life, being a most skilful and profound dissembler : but, when released from that subjection, her remembrance and resentment of Montmorenci's

rain, who courted her friendship, promised her the sacrifice of the late king's mistress, as the cement of their common union. This tempting condition, so grateful to female vengeance, determined the resolution of the queen. Diana, abandoned by the croud of courtiers who had surrounded her in Henry's reign; and destined to undergo in turn the humiliation which she had inflicted on the Duchess d'Estampes; withdrew immediately from a situation where her presence was grown odious, and where her power had become extinct. Retiring to the palace of Anet, she there passed the remainder of her life, in a splendid repose. Catherine, satisfied with political victory, and repressing, from regard to her husband's memory, any further persecution; permitted the Duchess to retain all the splendid presents which she had received from the bounty of her lover, without diminution*.

The

morenci's treatment, induced her to lend a ready assent to the suggestions and requests of the princes of Lorraine.

* It cannot be denied that the queen acted with the highest

1559. The young king, Francis the second, who ascended the throne, was only sixteen years and six months old ; but, as by the constitution of the monarchy, he was no longer in his minority, the whole power of the state resided in his person. Unfortunately for France, a weakness both of body and mind,

highest magnanimity and clemency on this occasion, when she might have taken a bloody and exemplary revenge on her rival. The Marechal de Tavannes offered to cut off the Duchess's nose ; but Catherine would not permit so ferocious an act. Even the Guises, tho' intimately connected with Diana by marriage, and principally indebted to her for their elevation and favor, yet were so base as to become her open enemies on Henry the second's death.—The Cardinal of Lorrain would even have been her bitterest persecutor, if his brother, the Duke of Alençon, who had married Diana's daughter, had not restrained, and reminded him, “that it would render himself infamous, to become the executioner of his own mother-in-law.” It does honor to the Constable, that he would not desert her, from respect to the memory of his benefactor Henry the second, tho' solicited to that purpose.—Diana expressed her gratitude to the queen, by a present of the superb palace of Chaumont-sur-Loire, situated in the midst of those lands assigned to Catherine for her dowry. She received from the queen in return, the castle of Chenonceaux, in Touraine.

approach-

approaching to debility, incapacitated him even more than his youth, for the conduct of public affairs. Governed absolutely by his mother, and by the two princes of Lorrain, uncles to the queen consort, Mary of Scotland ; he had neither judgment to direct himself, nor ability to withstand their advice and suggestions. A real minority thus took place, tho' the king was of full age. When the deputies of the parliament of Paris waited on him, to express their duty and allegiance to his person, he informed them that he had thought proper to invest the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorrain, with the supreme administration of affairs ; assigning to the former the military department, and the finances to the latter*.

The

* The instant that the late king Henry the second had breathed his last, the Guises without delay conveyed the young sovereign, Francis, to the palace of the Louvre ; where Catherine of Medicis immediately followed them. Her anxiety to share with those princes, the royal authority, impelled her to quit her husband's body, contrary to the ancient, invariable custom of the queens dowager of France ; which did not allow them to leave their chamber during forty days, nor even to

1559. The Constable foreseeing this inevitable triumph of his enemies, had announced its approach

see the sun or moon, till the royal obsequies were performed. The Duke and Cardinal having thus gained the exclusive possession of the new king's person, effectually prevented Montmorenci from having any access to him; because, by his office of Constable, he was under a necessity of remaining with the corpse of the deceased sovereign, and superintending his funeral, the ceremony of which lasted three-and-thirty days. When, therefore, after these solemnities were performed, Montmorenci repaired to the Louvre, in order to express his duty to the young king; Francis, instructed by his uncles the Guises, received the Constable with every demonstration of respect and affection: but, under pretence of sparing his age, permitted him to retire to Chantilli, as a retreat becoming his time of life and infirmities. The Constable yielding to a necessity which he was not able to resist, quitted the court.

Anthony, king of Navarre, had retired from thence, previous to the death of Henry the second; indignant that by the late treaty of peace, signed with Spain at Catean in Cambresis, no attention had been paid to his interests, nor any endeavors exerted to compel Philip the second to restore to him the kingdom of Navarre. On the very day when Henry the second received his wound from Montgomeri's lance, the Constable, apprehensive that it would prove mortal, and conscious of

approach to the king of Navarre, who was retired into his principality of Bearn. Montmorenci urged him at the same time to repair immediately to court, and there claim the authority about the person of the young king, to which his rank entitled him as first prince of the blood. But, Anthony, incapable from character of any decisive resolution, and distrustful of Montmorenci's attachment; instead of instantly setting out for the capital, advanced by short journies, and stopt at Vendome. This ill-judged and tardy conduct at such a juncture, gave the Guises time to confirm their acquisition, and to strengthen their power. Montmorenci having been ordered to retire to his own palace in the country, the Cardinal de Tournon was recalled, and admitted to an ostensible association in the government. Bertrandi, to whom Diana

of the necessity of Anthony's personal appearance on the spot, dispatched a courier to press his instant departure and arrival at court. But, the king of Navarre, who imputed to Montmorenci the dereliction of his rights, sacrificed by the late peace; injudiciously refused to follow the advice given him, or to profit of it with due celerity.

1559. ~~de Poitiers~~ had caused the seals to be entrusted, being likewise dismissed ; Olivier, a man universally respected for his probity and honor, was created chancellor.

Meanwhile Anthony, impelled by the exhortations of his brother, the prince of Condé, no less than by those of Montmorenci ; at length arriving, found a reception cold even to indignity. The apartments which were assigned him in the court, had been purposely selected as unbecoming his quality ; nor would he have been able to obtain a lodging, if the Marechal de St. André had not lent him that occupied by himself. On his being presented to the new king, Francis made the same declaration to him, which he had already done to his parliament. Anthony's friends, who still were numerous, exhorted him to continue firm, and to wait the favourable opportunity of regaining his interest and credit. But, the Guises acting on his fears, by indirect menaces of the king of Spain's resentment, if he presumed to controvert the queen mother's, or her son's choice of ministers ; and Catherine, on the other hand, alluring him by a promise of procuring from Philip the

the second, the restitution of his kingdom of ^{1559.}
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Navarre; Anthony submitted without fur-  
ther effort. As his presence at court was  
nevertheless calculated to excite uneasiness in  
the breasts of the members of administration,  
it was judged proper to remove him: for this  
purpose, he received from Francis, the com-  
mission of conducting the princess Elizabeth,  
his sister, to the frontiers of Spain; of which  
kingdom she was destined to be queen, by  
her marriage with Philip the second\*.

The

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\* The prince of Condé, Coligay, and many others  
of the Calvinist lords, having met Anthony at Vendome,  
a council was there held, to deliberate on the steps  
requisite to be taken, for sharing at least the power of  
the state with the family of Guise. The prince of  
Condé and d'Andelot urged the most vigorous and vio-  
lent measures: the king of Navarre and the admiral  
Coligny, on the contrary, advised a slow and gentle  
mode of conduct. This latter opinion prevailed: An-  
thony was received by the young king, in a manner  
which afforded no hopes of displacing the Guises, or  
even of participating with them in the government.  
Francis's answers were cold, ungracious, and harsh;  
nor did he ever admit the king of Navarre into his pre-  
sence, except when the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal  
were with him. Thus repulsed, Anthony endeavoured

1559. The new ministers, who had thus possessed themselves of the person and power of the king ; conscious of the precarious foundation on which their authority rested, and dreading lest some attempt should be made upon it ; published an edict, forbidding any person to carry fire-arms, or even to wear a dress favourable to the concealment of such weapons. This order, calculated for their personal safety, and strongly expressive of their fears, ought not to excite astonishment, when it is considered that the Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal, were in fact foreigners, princes of the house of Lorrain. They had, indeed, become by adoption, French ; and the Duke had rendered the most distinguished services to the state, under the late reign :

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to work upon the queen mother. But, Catherine, versed in Italian wiles, duped the king of Navarre ; and, partly by terror, partly by flattery, induced him to desist from any further remonstrances. He was then dispatched on the empty ceremony of conveying the young queen of Spain, to Roncevaux in Navarre ; to which place the Duke of Alva came at the head of an embassy, to receive the princess, and to conduct her to Philip the second,

but,

but, their assumption of the whole power of <sup>1559.</sup> the crown, under a feeble youth, to the exclusion of the princes of the royal blood, and of the ancient nobility of the kingdom, did not the less excite universal indignation. Nor was Catherine herself, by birth an Italian, exempt from similar objections and reproaches. The edict, prohibiting the carriage of firearms, was speedily followed by a second, obviously dictated by their personal interests. In it the king declared, that he would henceforward permit no person to hold two posts at the same time. Coligny, who to the high charge of Admiral of France, joined the government of Picardy, resigned cheerfully the latter employment, in the expectation that it would be conferred on the prince of Condé ; but the Marechal de Brissac being recalled from his military command in Piedmont, was invested with that office. The Constable likewise, having reluctantly, after many delays, laid down his office of grand master of the household, bestowed on him by the late king, was succeeded in it by the Duke of Guise.

These measures, however calculated they  
H 3 might

1559. might be to excite general aversion or resentment, would not probably have produced insurrection or resistance; if they had not been followed by other steps, that sufficiently indicated the intolerant spirit of the administration. Animated by an intemperate and sanguinary zeal, the ministers persuaded their weak sovereign, that he only adhered to his father's maxims and conduct, in commencing a persecution against the Hugonots. Courts of ecclesiastical judicature, invested with inquisitorial powers, were erected, which took cognizance of heresy; and they were denominated the "Chambres ardentes," from the severity of the penalties which they inflicted. Not content with punishing such as were found culpable, the strictest search was made to discover offenders: crimes of the most improbable and flagitious nature, were imputed to them in their nightly assemblies; and a death of ignominy, accompanied with circumstances of cruelty, was decreed for their adhérrence to Calvinism. The rigor of the prosecutions, not confined to the capital, was imitated in the provinces; till at length this

this unhappy body of men being forced into resistance, and being actuated by despair, began to defend themselves against their oppressors. 1559.

The combined operation of these causes, was further aided and accelerated by some adventitious circumstances. A great number of troops having been disbanded, in consequence of the late peace, many military adventurers, whom the restitution of the duchy of Luxembourg to Philip the second, and that of Piedmont to the Duke of Savoy, had left unemployed, afforded the Calvinists the means of raising forces in case of necessity. The court, which then resided at Fontainbleau, was crowded with soldiers of fortune, who being for the most part destitute of subsistence, importunately demanded some recompense for their services. Instead of soothing, or mollifying them by hopes and promises, they were irritated by threats of the severest nature. The Cardinal of Lorraine, to whom, as having the management of the finances, they principally addressed their petitions; being unable to satisfy them, and apprehensive of some conspiracy among this multitude, published an edict, by which all

1559. persons, who had any favor to ask of the king, were commanded instantly to withdraw themselves, on pain of being hung up on a gibbet, which was expressly erected for that purpose in the forest of Fontainbleau. A proceeding at once so harsh and so despotic, not only irritated extremely all those against whom it was directed ; but, alienated from the Duke and Cardinal many brave officers, who were before devotedly attached to the house of Guise.

The foundations of the government, already shaken by so many external attacks, were still further undermined by internal causes. The mental inability of Francis might be in some measure supplied, by committing the administration to other hands : but his bodily complaints seemed to promise a reign of very short duration. Enfeebled by distempers, his health gave already alarming symptoms of decay. A quartan ague, with which he had been indisposed during several months, rendered him totally unfit for application to business of any kind ; and when this disorder quitted him, his face, which was covered with pustules, evinced the diseased state of his blood. He was therefore carried to the castle

castle of Blois, in hopes of receiving benefit from change of air, aided by the methods usually practised to abate the acrimony of scorbutic habits. A report even prevailed, which obtained general belief in that age, ignorant and credulous in all medical or physical Phenomena, as well as in their remedies ; that the blood of infants was procured, in order to make him a bath. The same story had been asserted of Louis the eleventh, during the period of his last illness, tho' probably without foundation. From the remedies administered, of whatever nature they were, the young king however appeared to derive some temporary benefit and relief.

Meanwhile, the severities exercised against the professors of the Reformed religion, were redoubled at Paris. Anne du Bourg, one of the five members of the parliament, whom Henry the second had committed to the Bastile, a few weeks before his death ; being brought to his trial, and adhering pertinaciously to his opinions, was capitally condemned. His execution was hastened, in consequence of the assassination of the President Minard, one of his judges ; to whom he had particu-

1559. particularly objected, and who had been zealously active in the seizure, as well as conviction of the Calvinists\*. The authors of this crime were never discovered; but, Robert Stuart, a native of Scotland, who afterwards fought in the battle of St. Denis, where he mortally wounded the Constable Montmo-

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\* Anne du Bourg was a man of distinguished talents and erudition. The unexpected death of the late king, Henry the second, had protracted his trial; and as the Elector Palatine, besides many other protestant princes of the German empire, interposed in his behalf, it is probable that his life might have been granted to the requests of such powerful intercessors, if the assassination of Minard had not irritated the commissioners who presided on his trial. This magistrate, returning from the "Palais," or court of criminal justice, to his own house, on the 12th of December, about six in the evening, was attacked and murdered by three russians. Du Bourg having been suspected, from some obscure and indirect menaces which he had thrown out against Minard, to have been privy to this attempt; the supposition tended to accelerate the sentence pronounced, by which he was condemned to be strangled, and his body consumed to ashes. Du Bourg suffered this punishment in the "Place du Greve," at Paris, to which he was drawn on a sledge, and there put to death at thirty-eight years of age.

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renci, being suspected, was seized on that account. He claimed the young queen's protection, to whom he declared himself related by blood. Mary disowned his alliance, and would extend no mark of favor towards him; but Stuart found resources in his own firmness and intrepidity. Having undergone the most excruciating pains of the torture, without making any confession, he was therefore absolved and dismissed.

Thus driven to despair by the ill-judged tyranny of their persecutors, and opposing the undaunted spirit of religious conviction, against the superior power of their enemies, the Calvinists began secretly to unite for their common preservation. Neither Louis, prince of Condé, nor Coligny, tho' notoriously proselytes to the new opinions, had however as yet declared themselves their chieftains. A private gentleman of the province of Perigord, named John de Bary la Renaudie, was notwithstanding commissioned by the principal persons among them, to collect a number of their followers under proper leaders. It was agreed that, arriving by different roads, they should all meet at Blois; and, having

1560.  
Feb.

first

1560. first presented a petition to the king, they should then seize on the persons of the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorrain, as enemies to the kingdom and the public tranquillity. If this design could have been concealed till the time fixed for its execution, it might have produced the most decisive consequences: but the secret being divulged, information of the conspiracy was sent to court from many quarters\*. The Guises, warned of the approaching

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\* Davila and De Thou agree in all the principal circumstances attending this memorable conspiracy. La Renaudie, who was a gentleman of an ancient family, brave even to intrepidity, and of a ruined fortune; had been not only unsuccessful in a law-suit, but had likewise been condemned to a severe fine and banishment, for having produced fictitious titles. Retiring to Geneva and Lausanne, where he imbibed the doctrines of the reformation; he there became known to a number of French, who had fled into Switzerland, to avoid persecution. By these exiles he was regarded as their deliverer; and returning into France, he traversed many provinces of the kingdom, under a feigned name. Nantes was appointed for the general place of rendezvous; and the first of February, 1560, was named by La Renaudie for the time of assembling, as the parliament of Bretagne, he knew, would be then sitting.

proaching danger, took every measure necessary to avert it. Francis having been removed

1560.

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sitting. Every precaution was there taken, in order to secure the success of this desperate enterprize: the respective destination of the principal conspirators was settled, and the 15th of March was fixed for the time of their general union at Blois, where the court then resided.

It would seem that the princes of Guise received various, tho' obscure intimations, that some insurrection was to be dreaded. Davila says, that the intelligence of it came from Germany; and De Thou confirms this opinion. The first authentic detail of the conspiracy was, however, brought to court by Avenelles, a protestant lawyer, at whose house in Paris La Renaudie lodged, and to whom he had divulged this dangerous secret.—Avenelles, from what motive is uncertain, instantly gave information of the plot to Milet, the Duke of Guise's secretary; by whom he was carried to Blois, from whence the king had already removed to Amboise. But the Cardinal of Lorraine not having instantly followed the court, Avenelles revealed to him every circumstance of the conspiracy.

It is not only probable, but almost certain, that if the enterprize had been successful, it was intended to seize on, and possibly to put the Guises to death, as enemies to the kingdom. They then projected to declare the prince of Condé regent or administrator, granting at the same time a complete toleration of the Reformed religion.

1560. moved from Blois to the castle of Amboise, as a place more capable of defence, immediately issued letters, commanding the prince of Condé's and the Admiral's attendance near his person ; both of whom obeyed. As a further precaution at a moment of such alarm, the Duke of Guise's title of Lieutenant-general of the kingdom, was confirmed : bodies of soldiery were stationed in every direction, on all the surrounding roads ; and a company of musqueteers, mounted on horseback, was raised to guard the person of the king.

March 15. Notwithstanding these judicious and necessary precautions, the conspirators, march-

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religion. These facts must be admitted : but it is at least as indisputable, that the attempt was never extended to the person of the king, nor of any of the royal family, as calumny pretended, with intent to render the Hugonots odious to the nation. Davila avows this truth, tho' he mentions the conspiracy with detestation : De Thou even goes further, and assures us, that the chiefs concerned in the enterprize, only meant to liberate the kingdom from the tyranny of the house of Guise. He adds, that they even bound themselves by oath, to defend the king and royal family with their lives and fortunes, against every attempt contrary to the laws.

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ing in small bands, and only during the night, 1560.  
appeared unexpectedly at the gates of Am-  
boise. The Cardinal of Lorrain, terrified at  
the approach of danger, betrayed the timidity  
which was natural to him ; but his brother  
the Duke instantly prepared to meet it with  
becoming courage. His cool discernment  
appeared conspicuously in this hour of diffi-  
culty ; and he instantly assembled the guards,  
the nobility, and the inhabitants. Suspect-  
ing the prince of Condé, if not of being an  
accomplice, at least, of secretly supporting  
the conspirators, the Duke committed to  
him the defence of one of the gates : but at  
the same time he took care to associate with  
the prince, one of his own brothers, who  
watched all his movements, and prevented  
him from lending the most indirect assistance  
to the enemy.

The Calvinists, thus discovered, and opposed  
by so vigilant an adversary, were all dis-  
persed, taken, or cut in pieces. La Renaudie,  
accompanied by only a few desperate  
associates, being met in the forest of Chateau-  
Renaud, by the Baron de Pardaillan, at the  
head of two hundred cavalry ; defended him-  
self,

1560. self, notwithstanding the disparity of numbers, with a bravery heightened by despair. But, his followers being almost all slain, and no chance remaining either of victory or of retreat, he spurred his horse up to Pardaillan, and thrusting a poniard thro' his vizor, laid him dead upon the ground. La Renaudie himself fell soon afterwards, by a ball from a Harquebusse ; and his body being brought to Amboise, was suspended during some hours on a gallows, erected upon the bridge across the Loire. All the inferior conspirators were treated with the same ignominy. Their bodies, after being dragged at the tails of their horses, were fastened on iron hooks round the walls of a royal castle in which the sovereign resided ; booted, and dressed as they fell in the field\*.

It

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\* La Renaudie, tho' he found that the court had quitted Blois, and had retired for protection to the castle of Amboise, which, from its situation as well as from art, might easily resist an attack ; yet determined to proceed. Ligneret, one of the principal leaders in the conspiracy, having however betrayed his associates, and given the most exact information of the time and roads, by which the different bands were to arrive : the

Marechal

It was nevertheless debated in the cabinet, 1560. to extend mercy and pardon to the chiefs. Olivier, the Chancellor, advised lenient measures ; and even the Guises were suspended between clemency and severity ; when a new, but unsuccessful attempt to surprize the town, on the part of the Calvinists, gave a loose to the most violent proceedings against them.

La Mothe and Coqueville, two of the prin-

Marechal de St. André, and the Duke of Nemours, were sent out to intercept, and to cut them in pieces. The Baron de Castelnau, another of the chiefs, at the head of a considerable body of his followers, being invested in the castle of Noisai by the Duke of Nemours, surrendered, on promise of life for himself and his associates ; but this capitulation was disregarded and violated by the opposite party. La Renaudie, who had received information of Castelnau's danger, endeavoring to arrive in time for his relief, was met by Pardaillan in the woods near Amboise. After a brave, tho' ineffectual resistance, the Calvinists were routed ; and La Renaudie, after having killed Pardaillan, was shot through the thigh by that officer's page, and died fighting desperately to the last moment. His troops were almost all put to death upon the spot. La Renaudie's body was hung upon a gibbet, with a label affixed to it, containing the words, "Chef des Re- " belles ;" and his quarters were afterwards exposed on stakes, in the environs of Amboise.

1560. cipal conspirators, not dismayed by the ill success of their friends, made another attack upon Amboise. The retaliation exercised, justly excites horror, and can scarcely be paralleled among the most barbarous nations. All who were taken in arms, even tho' on their return home, were put to death ; and a number not less than twelve hundred are said to have expired under the hands of the executioner. The streets of Amboise ran with human blood ; the Loire was covered with floating carcasses ; and all the open places were crowded with gibbets, on which hung those unfortunate men, whose bodies infected the air with a pestilential smell.

After these inhuman and impolitic executions, the principal leaders were finally led out to death. The queen-mother, with her three younger sons, accompanied by all the principal ladies of the court, did not scruple to be spectators of this cruel exhibition, which they contemplated from the windows of the castle, as a diversion. Two of the chiefs, under the agony of the torture, were induced to accuse the prince of Condé as a participator in the conspiracy : but the Baron de Castelnau, being

being confronted with them, denied it strongly ; and even at the moment before his head was severed from his body, continued to assert the prince's perfect innocence \*.

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\* La Bigne, who was secretary to La Renaudie, being put to the question, only asserted that it was commonly believed, the prince of Condé would have put himself at the head of the conspirators, if the enterprize had been accompanied with success. This accusation, if such it could be properly termed, was confirmed by Raunay and Mazere, two of the leaders, previous to their execution ; but the Baron de Castelnau peremptorily contradicted their deposition.—This nobleman was of the most amiable and honorable character, infinitely beloved by the whole court, and descended from a family which had done distinguished services to the state. The strongest entreaties were used to save his life : Coligny, his brother d'Andelot, and even the Duke of Aumale, tho' brother to the Duke of Guise, interceded for his pardon. The queen-mother herself inclined to clemency, and wished to spare him ; but Francis, instigated by the two princes of Lorrain, his uncles, remained inexorable. Castelnau, tho' he submitted to the sentence of death with perfect composure ; yet, when the crime for which he suffered, was stated to be that of high treason, burst into the most indignant complaints :—“ If,” said he to his judges,

1560. Some suspicions however still attaching to him, notwithstanding this positive deposition in his favor, he demanded permission to clear himself in full council before the king; and Catherine, always systematically endeavoring to hold the balance between the contending factions, as being the line of conduct most beneficial to her interests, granted his request.

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“ it be declared treason to have taken up arms against  
“ strangers, who have violated the laws, and usurped  
“ the sovereign authority, let them be proclaimed  
“ kings!”

Villemongey, one of the principal conspirators, being conducted to the scaffold, which was already covered with the bodies of his friends who had suffered; imbrued his hand in their blood, and holding it up to Heaven, “ Behold!” exclaimed he, “ righteous Judge, “ the innocent blood of those who have fought thy “ cause! thou wilt not leave their death unrevenged.” The royal family, and all the ladies of the court, were present at these affecting and inhuman spectacles. The Duchess of Guise alone, Anne d'Esté, retired to her apartment to lament in silence these executions, which she had vainly deprecated. She descended from Louis the twelfth, by her mother, Renée, Duchess of Ferrara, youngest daughter of that prince. The Duchess of Guise, as well as her mother, were suspected of an adherence to the doctrines of the Reformation.

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The prince, with that intrepidity which distinguished all his actions, vindicated his honor from the calumnious imputations cast upon it. After having given the lye to who-soever should dare to maintain or to assert the charge against him ; he offered to engage with his accuser in single combat, as the most convincing proof of his adversary's falsehood. The Cardinal of Lorrain, who clearly saw at whom this defiance was levelled, made a sign to the young monarch to rise without reply : but his brother, the duke, concealing his indignation under the mask of friendship, praised with affected warmth the prince's conduct, and offered himself to become Condé's second, against whatever antagonist. He did not however the less strenuously advise in private, to arrest the prince ; but the queen-mother, who foresaw the annihilation of her own power by such an act, 'as no counterpoise would then remain to the authority of the Guises, opposed and prevented its execution.

The Chancellor Olivier dying at this time, March 30.  
of grief and horror excited by the sanguinary scenes to which he had been a witness.

1560. ness\*, was succeeded in that high office by Michael de l'Hopital, a great and able minister,

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\* Olivier, who rose under the protection of Margaret, queen of Navarre, sister of Francis the first, to whom he had been Chancellor ; was raised to the same high dignity in France, by Francis the first himself, in 1545. While he held this employment, his integrity, firmness, and love of his country, rendered him beloved by all France. Henry the second deprived him of the seals, on his accession to the throne ; which were entrusted to Bertrandi, a man devoted to the Duchess de Valentinois. Soon after the time when Olivier was recalled, and re-invested with his office under Francis the second ; the emperor Ferdinand the first sent the bishop of Trent into France, to demand the restitution of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, which cities Henry the second had retained by the peace of Cateau, and which had been dismembered from the German empire. Ferdinand wisely chose the opportunity of a weak and tumultuous reign, such as that of Francis, in which to reclaim these fiefs ; and he had moreover commissioned the bishop his ambassador, to bribe such of the lords of the French council as might be found inimical to his demand. The Chancellor, aware of Ferdinand's intentions, and vigilant to counteract them, opening the debate, declared that it was incumbent to take off the head of that person, who should dare to propose so pernicious and traiterous a measure, as the surrender of the cities and districts reclaimed by the emperor. This bold, as well

ster, devoted to the queen-mother. But, 1560.  
unfortunately, his advice, tho' always temperate and judicious, yet confirmed her in that system of temporizing policy, and in those arts of division and disunion, which distinguished her character. Apprehensive lest the Guises should obtain a complete victory over the princes of the blood, and thereby annihilate her own authority, she secretly supported Condé and the Hugonots, in their demands of toleration. A convocation of the nobility having been summoned for this purpose at Fontainbleau, to which place the young king repaired; it was attended by the Constable Montmorenci, Coligny, and a nu-Aug. 20.merous train of followers. The assembly was held in Catherine's own cabinet, Francis himself being present in person. The Admiral then advancing, and throwing himself on his knees before his sovereign, presented him a petition unsigned, in which a toleration was demanded for the professors of the reformed

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as honest declaration, intimidated and overawed those who might otherwise have advised such a step, and preserved these valuable acquisitions to the crown of France.

1560. religion ; adding, that tho' as yet no names were affixed to it, yet whenever his majesty should be pleased to signify his pleasure, it would be instantly subscribed by an hundred and fifty thousand persons. The Cardinal of Lorrain, animated by zeal, having opposed the indulgence requested by Coligny, with that impetuous and commanding eloquence for which he was distinguished ; expressions of so much asperity passed between the princes of Lorrain and the Admiral, as to oblige Francis to impose silence on the two parties. No decisive resolution was taken on the subject : but the states-general were ordered to assemble in the month of December ensuing ; and a national council was likewise proposed, in hopes of finally adjusting these religious differences.

Neither the king of Navarre, nor the prince of Cendé, were present at this conference ; they having previously retired into the province of Guyenne, where they were engaged in concerting measures to dispossess the Septem. Guises of their power and offices. The person whom Anthony employed as his confidant and messenger, a man of the name of La Sague,

Sague, having imprudently communicated the commission with which he was charged, to one of his friends named Bonval ; this person betrayed the trust *réposed* in him, and gave information to the ministers, of La Sague's errand. He was immediately seized at Estampes, by order of the queen-mother, on his return into Gascony, together with a number of letters which he carried. The terror of the torture induced him to confess the method of discovering their contents ; and those of Francis de Vendome, Vidame or governor of Chartres, a personal enemy of the Duke of Guise, were regarded as peculiarly criminal. He was not only one of the most brave and gallant lords of the court, but had even been so particularly acceptable to, and favored by Catherine, as to give rise to suspicions very injurious to her honor\*.

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\* The protestant writers, who detested Catherine of Medicis, have not failed to accuse her of gallantries, among her other faults and crimes. Jurieu particularly names the Duke of Nemours, the Vidame of Chartres, and the Marquis de Mescoüet, as her lovers ; and declares her to have been criminally intimate with all these noblemen. Impartial justice must, however, acquit

1560. Being now however become equally an object of her hatred, she caused him to be carried to the Bastile ; from whence he was transferred some time afterwards to the palace of the Tournelles, where he died either of chagrin, or of the consequences of his debaucheries.

Bouchard, Chancellor to the king of Navarre, being likewise seized, and actuated by the same timidity as La Sague, accused the prince of Condé with having endeavored to seduce his brother to engage in treasonable practices. Notwithstanding these many acts of undisguised hostility on the part of the court, which ought to have rendered them distrustful ; Anthony and Louis, after long irresolution, and many delays, finally embraced the dangerous resolution of attending in person the states, which were convoked at Orleans.

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quit her from such imputations. Ambition, not love, was her predominant passion : and her conduct towards Mademoiselle de Limenil, when seduced by the prince of Condé, of which there will be occasion to speak particularly hereafter, was very opposite to any such libertinism.—Mezerai, and Le Laboureur, only blame her love of pleasures, without throwing any reflections on her honor, which are certainly to be distrusted as false aspersions.

Francis himself, quitting the palace of Fontainebleau on account of the danger to which his person was exposed in so defenceless a place, removed to the castle of St. Germain. His health appeared to be even in so precarious and declining a state, as to induce the Guises to order public prayers for its restoration. But, it being necessary for him to open the deliberations of the states in person, the young king proceeded towards Orleans, escorted by a thousand horse; accompanied by the queen-mother, and by Charles, Duke of Orleans, his brother. He entered that city Oct. 18. in a sort of military pomp, to which the nation had been little accustomed; and which had more the appearance of a conqueror triumphing over rebels, than the progress of a sovereign scarcely attained to manhood, who could neither be supposed to have forfeited, nor alienated, the affections of his people.

Meanwhile the two princes of Bourbon set out to attend the assembly of the states. Their friends advised them, as the best security, to appear well armed, and well accompanied: but the mandate which the Guises had issued in the king's name, forbidding them

1560 them to bring any other followers than those of their own household ; when added to the confidence which they reposed in their near relationship to the royal blood, induced them to despise and neglect these salutary precautions\*. Various informations and intimations

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\* Divila, the great directing historian of these times, accurately lays open the artifices which the Guises used, in order to draw the two brothers into the snare. Louis, says he, conscious that his co-operation in the late conspiracies and commotions, might be ascertained from the papers and persons recently seized, peremptorily refused to trust himself in the power of his enemies. But, Anthony, either more innocent, or more credulous ; deeming it impossible that an Italian woman, and two foreigners, would venture to arrest, and capitally to punish the first princes of the blood ; inclined to attend the states. While they fluctuated in this state of uncertainty, the Count de Crussol and the Marechal de St. André were dispatched by the young king, to induce them by the strongest assurances of amity, not to delay their journey : but Condé still remained firm in his first determination. This report being made by the Count de Crussol, on his return to court, the Marechal de Ternes was sent into Gascony, and was ordered to levy a body of troops, which might invest them in Bearn, where they were unprepared for their defence. At the same time, the queen-mother, ever

tions of a very alarming nature, met them nevertheless on their way towards Orleans. They were assured by their friends in the court, that Francis and his mother, hurried on by the impetuous counsels of the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal, had been either induced or compelled to adopt the most sanguinary measures: but the two princes, notwithstanding these advices, resolutely continued their journey\*. On their arrival at Orleans, Oct. 29,

when

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ever effecting her schemes by dissimulation, prevailed on Charles, Cardinal of Bourbon, brother to Anthony and Louis, to add his entreaties to her own, and assured him of the good intentions of Francis. The Cardinal, convinced of Catherine's sincerity, and relying on her promises, instantly left Orleans, and proceeded to Bearn; where he implored the two princes his brothers, no longer to refuse their obedience to the repeated orders of their sovereign. These united efforts were at length successful: the princes reluctantly left Pau, and with a slender train proceeded towards Orleans.

\* The king of Navarre, considering in his innocence, and trusting likewise to his high rank, refused seven hundred gentlemen of Poictou the permission to accompany him to Orleans, and forbade above fifteen hundred others, who had prepared to attend and escort his person. Marillac, archbishop of Vienne, conscious of the danger

1560. when they entered the royal presence and  
saluted the king, he gave them a cold and  
ungracious reception. At the instant of their  
departure from the royal presence, two cap-  
tains of the guard took them into custody.  
Anthony was only carefully watched ; but  
the prince of Condé was committed close pri-

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danger into which the two princes of Bourbon were  
precipitating themselves, gave them the most authentio-  
information of the intentions of their enemies : but they  
disregarded all admonition.

As they advanced towards Orleans, their retreat was  
cut off by troops, who occupied the provinces behind  
them, thro' which they must have returned into Bearn.  
No sooner had the court received certain advice of their  
being on the territory of France, than, as if that act  
had served as a signal for taking off the mask, Grollot,  
Bailiff of Orleans, who was suspected of holding a cor-  
respondence with Anthony, was committed to custody.

At Poitiers, Montpezat, the governor, shut the gates  
of that city against the princes : but, on their instantly  
suspending their journey, and complaining of this in-  
sult, by a messenger whom they dispatched to court ;  
the Marechal de Termes was sent to excuse it in the  
king's name, and they were received in triumph into  
Poitiers. Termes having executed this commission,  
followed them at some distance, with a body of cavalry,  
to observe their motions, till their final entry into Or-  
leans.

soner to a house erected purposely in a public square, which was defended by some pieces of cannon\*. 1560.

The

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\* The Marechal de Brissac first proposed in council, to arrest the prince of Condé ; and Francis signed the order, which was reluctantly countersigned by l'Hôpital, the Chancellor.

“ I saw the two brothers, Anthony and Louis,” says Brantôme, “ when they arrived : the king of Navarre entered the court of the palace on horseback ; the prince, on foot. Never did I see a man exhibit a more bold and fearless mien than did the latter : but, on his return, when arrested, he appeared covered with astonishment. Anthony, who had thought to disconcert and terrify his enemies, by his threats and appearance at court, was not less confounded and amazed.”

Davila has related, with equal accuracy and minuteness, all the principal circumstances which preceded and attended the arrest of the two princes : they are too authentic and interesting to be omitted.—“ When they entered the city of Orleans,” says he, “ they found all the streets lined with soldiers, thro’ whom they passed to the king’s lodging : but, the gate being shut, and only the wicket left open, the two princes were compelled to dismount, and to enter on foot. Scarcely any of the persons whom they met, saluted them : and on being conducted into the royal presence, they found the young king seated “ between

1560. The admiral Coligny was in Orleans at this time ; but d'Andelot his brother, more circumspect,

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“ between the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine, surrounded by the captains of the guard. Francis received them with coldness, and then conducted them himself, to the apartment of the queen-mother ; the Guises not following. Catherine, with her accustomed dissimulation, and in order to preserve the appearance of impartiality, treated the princes with every demonstration of affection, mixed with sadness ; and she even shed tears on the occasion. But, Francis, with looks of resentment, and in terms of reproach, arraigned the prince of Condé, accused him of attempting to seize on the principal cities of his dominions, and even of having plotted against his life, and that of his brothers. Condé, not in the least dismayed, boldly denied the accusation, and said that he would make his own innocence, and the calumny of his enemies, apparent to the whole world. ‘ To ascertain the truth,’ answered Francis, ‘ it is necessary to proceed by the usual modes of justice :’ and instantly quitting the room, gave orders to the captains of the guard to arrest the prince of Condé.

“ Catherine, affecting on this memorable occasion, the utmost sympathy and concern, endeavored to soothe the two princes, tho’ she had previously consented to the act of seizing on Condé ; who suffered himself to be led away, only venting his reproaches

“ on

cumspect, and foreseeing the danger, had retired into the province of Bretagne. Magdalén de Roye, mother to the princess of Condé, was arrested at her own house of Anici in Picardy, by Tannegui de Carrouge; who sent her prisoner to the castle of St. Germain; and Grollot, Bailiff of Orleans, had been already taken into custody.

The Chancellor, and five judges, who were appointed to interrogate the prince of Condé;

“ on his own folly, for having been so deluded by the  
 “ good faith and credulity of the Cardinal his brother,  
 “ as to venture himself in the power of his enemies.  
 “ Anthony remained alone with the queen-mother, who  
 “ threw the whole odium of the prince’s arrest, on  
 “ the Duke of Guise, and endeavored to remove all  
 “ participation in it from herself. After a long con-  
 “ versation, the king of Navarre was conducted to an  
 “ apartment prepared for him, in a house adjoining  
 “ to the palace in which Francis resided; and where,  
 “ tho’ he was permitted the liberty of conversation, he  
 “ was in every other respect a prisoner.”

Philip de Maillé Brezé, and Chavigny, captains of the body guard, arrested the prince of Condé; he was then led to a tower of brick, erected for the purpose, and on which were mounted some pieces of cannon. Iron bars were fixed to the windows; and the door was closed up, only an opening being left in it, by which to convey to him provisions and necessaries.

1560. waited on him in prison for that purpose. In ~~no~~ no degree terrified by the violence exercised against him, he refused to plead before so incompetent a tribunal; and demanded a public trial by the whole parliament, peers, and king, to which he was entitled by his high dignity. This spirited and intrepid behaviour, whatever honor it might reflect on the prince, did not however disconcert his enemies, nor delay the proceedings against him, which were continued without interruption. He stood on the brink of destruction; while the Guises, already anticipating the fall of this powerful rival, and elevated with their own success, observed scarcely any deference towards the queen-mother, whom they secretly suspected, and whom they intended to divest of all influence or authority. Catherine perceived the error which she had committed, in so closely uniting herself with the princes of Lorrain, against Anthony and Louis; but it was too late to retract, and the evil was beyond a remedy\*. The condemnation

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\* The Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorrain publicly boasted, says Davila, that "at two blows  
" only,

demnation and execution of Grolot, were <sup>1560.</sup> ~~universally~~ regarded as being preparatory to that of the prince of Condé ; when an unexpected event, productive of the most important consequences, averted the blow, and snatched him from impending death.

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“ only, they would cut off the heads of heresy and of rebellion.” Permission was refused the prince of Condé to see either his wife, or his brothers ; but he was allowed to write to them. Anthony would, in all probability, have been involved in the fate of his brother, as the princes of Guise must naturally have dreaded the revenge due to the execution of Condé. The 25th of November was regarded as the day fixed on for that melancholy spectacle, and his death seemed equally imminent and inevitable. Davila draws a masterly and striking picture of the queen-mother’s conduct, during the time of the prince of Condé’s trial and imprisonment. She anxiously desired to appear innocent of the crime, to which she had, notwithstanding, previously consented : she wore a face of sorrow and distress : she continually sent for the Admiral Coligny, and his brother the Cardinal de Chatillon, on pretence of finding some expedient to extricate the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé : she even dispatched the Duchess of Montpensier to Anthony, with kind and condoling messages. “ So exquisitely,” adds Davila, “ did she dissemble, that even those who knew her best, yet hesitated in pronouncing whether she was sincere or not in her affectation of concern.”

1560. The king, in order to avoid being present  
 ~~~~~ Nov. at Grollot's execution, had gone out to the  
 17. chace. On his return from that diversion he
 was attacked with a heaviness in his head,
 which at the end of some days was followed
 by a suppuration, and an imposthume in his
 ear*. The symptoms did not at first appear
 mortal, or alarming ; but the Guises appre-
 hensive of the event, and dreading lest their
 prey should escape, pushed on the trial of
 the prince with an unprecedented and inde-
 cent haste. The customary forms, observed
 in capital cases, were omitted, and he was at
 last condemned to lose his head.

* Davila says, that “ Francis being under his bar-
 ber’s hands, was suddenly seized with an apoplectic
 or fainting fit, and that his attendants immediately
 laid him on the couch without signs of life. His
 senses returned after some time ; but it was evident,
 from the nature of the attack, and the effects which
 it left, that he could not long survive ” De Thou
 calls it an abscess which the king had in his head, and
 which beginning to suppurate thro’ his ear, was attend-
 ed with the most fatal symptoms. Mezerai speaks of it
 in similar terms ; but adds, that during the first five
 or six days it was not regarded as mortal, or even as
 dangerous.

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The Chancellor l'Hopital, who had been always averse to the violent measures pursued, seeing that Francis's complaints assumed every hour a more dangerous appearance, artfully delayed affixing his signature to the order for the prince's execution. But, so despotic was the influence of the princes of Lorrain, and so servile the devotion paid to them ; that among all the great personages with whom the court was crowded, comprehending the principal nobility of France ; the Count de Sancerre alone had the courage to refuse absolutely to sign the warrants, tho' three repeated orders were brought him from the king, for that purpose. Whether Francis himself had affixed to it his sign manual or not, is a secret of state that has never been divulged, and on which historians differ.

In the mean time the physicians, forming their opinion from the nature of the symptoms which they observed in the young king, and a mortification which had begun to manifest itself, declared him near his end. The Guises, conscious of the critical situation in which their daring measures had involved them ; and believing that their own personal

1560. safety was inseparably connected with a steady adherence to the principles which they had hitherto pursued ; remained firm in their determination to put the prince of Condé to death. Placing their confidence only in the prosecution of this criminal proceeding, they even endeavored to induce Catherine to join them in arresting the king of Navarre, and in conducting him to a similar fate. But she, too wise to be rendered subservient to their ambitious purposes ; and emancipated in some measure by the prospect of Francis's death, from the tyranny which they had exercised over her ; refused to consent to, or to permit of so sanguinary an act*. She already

* Monsieur de Thou expressly asserts, that previous to the young king's apoplectic attack on the 17th of November, the Guises, apprehensive that if Anthony was left alive, he would revenge the prince of Condé's death, took the decisive resolution of causing him to be assassinated. Their consciousness of being the objects of the public hatred, on account of their despotism and tyranny, confirmed them in this desperate and criminal purpose, which was absolutely debated, and finally settled in a secret council. The misguided king, who was to be made the instrument of

ready beheld herself in that precise situation to which she had long aspired. The approaching

1560.

of so foul and base an assassination, committed on the person of the first prince of the royal blood, consented to be a participator in its execution. For that purpose it was agreed on, that he should command the attendance of Anthony in his own cabinet, the Guises being present; where, feigning to have discovered new proofs of his treasonable practices, he should reproach the king of Navarre in the severest manner. As they naturally imagined that this latter prince would reply in terms of warmth and generous indignation, they meant to take advantage of that circumstance, and to dispatch him in the confusion, under pretence of his having threatened Francis's life. Anthony having received information of this barbarous project, from some of the adherents of the Guises themselves, was at first undecided what conduct to hold: but, reflecting that he was absolutely in the power of his enemies, who could effect their purpose in any way which they chose; he boldly resolved to prepare himself for the worst, and to dispute his life with his own sword, if personally attacked. In this perilous and awful moment, calling to him Reinsy, one of his gentlemen; "If they kill me," said he, "carry my shirt all bloody, to my wife and son! They will read in my blood, what they ought to do to revenge it."

Anthony then entered the apartment where the young king, Francis the second, was seated, and ap-

1560. proaching minority left the regency open to her ambition ; while both parties paid her the most assiduous court, as to the common arbitress of their lives and fortunes. In the

proaching him, kissed his hand with profound submission. Softened by this behaviour, and affected by the presence of Anthony, the king changed his resolution, and omitted to give the sign previously settled, at which the surrounding attendants were to fall upon the king of Navarre. It is pretended, adds De Thou, that the Duke of Guise, finding his project abortive, exclaimed with a voice full of indignation, “ Oh ! le “ timide et lache enfant !”

This story, which powerfully arrests the imagination, conveys an astonishing idea of the bold and criminal lengths to which the princes of Guise carried their projects of vengeance and aggrandizement. We cannot wonder at the irresolution of a prince of eighteen years of age, refusing to stain the majesty of the throne with so atrocious a deed. But we are lost in astonishment at the audacity of the persons, who could dare to propose to their sovereign, as a measure of state, so flagitious and unmanly an assassination. Tho' Davila does not relate this anecdote, yet he expressly asserts, that not only previous to the king's attack of apoplexy, but at the time when his death was regarded as equally imminent and certain, the Guises implored the queen-mother to put the king of Navarre to death, before Francis's eyes were closed.

anticipa-

anticipation of Francis's death, she took with cool perspicuity and consummate address, the necessary precautions for securing to herself the first place in the government under Charles, her second son, the immediate heir to the crown, who was only ten years and five months old. Anthony promised by an instrument in writing, to cede to her the regency, which belonged to him of right, as first prince of the blood ; and the Guises swore to serve her in every manner, for and against whomsoever she commanded*.

In

* De Thou and Davila perfectly coincide in their account of Catherine's conduct, during the last hours of her son Francis's life. The Guises urged her to put both the princes, Anthony and Louis, to death, as the only certain means of securing the regency to herself, and providing for the tranquillity of the new reign. The Duchess of Montpensier, who opposed this sanguinary advice, represented to the queen-mother, that by following it she would confirm the power of the princes of Lorrain, and would become their slave, instead of their arbitress. Catherine hesitated long between these different lines of conduct, endeavoring to gain time ; giving out, that there were yet great hopes of the young king's recovery, and intending eventually to conform to circumstances.

De

1560. In the midst of these intrigues and cabals,
Dec. 5. Francis the second breathed his last, on the
eighteenth day from his seizure, aged only
seventeen years, ten months and a half, of
which he had reigned about a year and five
months*.

We

De l'Hopital, the chancellor, confirmed her in
this system of procrastination; and at last, when the
symptoms of Francis's disorder appeared to indicate
his imminent and inevitable dissolution, he strongly
advised the queen to spare both the prince of Bourbon,
and even to enter into a private negotiation with the
king of Navarre. In pursuance of this salutary coun-
sel, Catherine dispatched the Prince-Dauphin of Au-
vergne, son to the Duchess of Montpensier, to bring
the king of Navarre privately in the night, to her own
chamber. They there conferred together; and after
the queen had again disclaimed all participation in the
trial, and intended execution of the prince of Condé,
she assured Anthony of her desire to join with him, to
repress the exorbitant power of the house of Guise.
This interview and compact took place only a few
hours before the death of Francis the second.

* The critical nature of Francis's death, so oppor-
tune for the preservation of the prince of Condé, and
so fortunate to Catherine of Medicis, whom the Guises
had deprived of all influence, gave rise to reports of
poison. "Le Laboureur," and several other writers,
have

We know not with any certainty what qualities of mind he possessed, or might have 1560.
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have accused Ambrose Paré, the king's surgeon, and a Scotch valet-de-chambre, who was a Hugonot, with having poisoned Francis's night-cap, exactly at the place which answered to, and covered the imposthume in his ear. But, de Thou, infinitely more worthy of credit, denies and disproves this assertion. That historian expressly attributes his death, to the weakness of his constitution, and to hereditary maladies derived from his mother.

Davila, tho' he seems to incline likewise to the belief that Francis died a natural death, yet mentions the opinion generally received, of his having been poisoned. "The young king," says he, "had always been troubled with pains and defluxions in his head, from his infancy. An imposthume formed itself over his right ear; which bursting, so great a quantity of matter fell into his throat, that it stopped up the passage, and prevented him either from speaking, or receiving any sort of nourishment.—Most people," continues Davila, "believed at the time, that his barber had conveyed poison into his ear; and it was even reported, that the physicians had discovered evident signs of the fact. The sudden nature of Francis's seizure, and the extraordinary crisis in which he expired, would have given universal credit to the accusation, even among men of the best understandings; if the disorder which

" termin-

1560. discovered, if he had attained to manhood :  
 but his capacity appears to have been very weak, and his bodily infirmities increased these mental defects. The Guises, not Francis, may be said to have reigned, during the short period that he nominally occupied the throne. Some French historians have absurdly given him the epithet of “The king without vice.” Voltaire has drawn his portrait more spiritedly and more justly, in his poem of the “Hen-“ riade.”

“ Foible enfant, qui de Guise adorait les caprices,  
 “ Et dont on ignorait les vertus et les vices.”

His continence has been absurdly made the

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“ terminated his life, had not been known to have  
 “ grown up with him from his cradle.”

After the testimonies of these two last historians, we cannot hesitate to believe the king’s death natural, and almost inevitable, from his constitutional debility and complaints. It does not appear that any inquiries were made, to ascertain whether the young queen Mary was pregnant. Charles, Duke of Orleans, was immediately declared king, by the name of Charles the ninth. The weakness of Francis’s constitution, seems to have precluded any expectation of issue by his marriage, notwithstanding the queen’s youth and beauty.

subject

subject of encomium : but, to the feeble state of his health and his early youth, this virtue may be chiefly attributed ; besides that his attachment to his consort Mary was extreme, and her beauty, as well as her accomplishments were such, as might have imposed a restraint on the most dissolute of mankind. 1560.

Francis's funeral was indecently neglected, ambition and political intrigue occupying the whole court. Catherine, who had been ostentatiously magnificent in the obsequies of her husband, was equally remiss in those of her son : while the Guises, on whom he had heaped so many favors, and to whom he had confided such unlimited power, by a conduct which justly subjected them to the accusation of ingratitude, did not shew him this last and slender token of respect. They excused themselves, under the frivolous pretext of remaining to console the young queen, their niece ; but in reality, with intent, by their presence and authority, to controul, or to overawe their enemies.

Among so many of the great nobility and ecclesiastics who were assembled at Orleans, only Sansac and La Brosse, among the former,

1569. mer, who had been Francis's governors; and Guillard, Bishop of Senlis, among the clergy; a prelate who was blind; followed his corpse to St. Denis. Upon the funereal pall which covered his coffin, a billet or Pasquinade was found, containing this severe and pointed sarcasm, “Tanneguy du Chatel, où es tu?” The allusion here made, was to the funeral rites of Charles the seventh. Du Chatel, who had been that monarch's favorite and chamberlain, having been afterwards banished from court, on Charles's death he instantly returned; and as a mark of his gratitude and affection towards a sovereign whom he had loved, was said to have buried him at his own private expence, with royal magnificence.

Francis the second leaving no legitimate issue, the crown descended to Charles his brother. Mary, queen of France and Scotland, seems to have performed no political part during her husband's reign. Subservient to, and awed by the aspiring ambition of her uncles, the princes of Lorrain, she was only an instrument in their hands, altogether directed to their purposes of aggrandizement. They made use of her influence over the young king,

king, in order to incline him the more readily to adopt their measures. In a court of such gallantry, where her beauty was the object of general admiration, she did not however escape some reflections on her private character; but they may be considered as aspersions, unworthy of mention or refutation.

The Constable Montmorenci, who had been repeatedly ordered to appear in person at Orleans, but whose natural distrust and caution, augmented by the late events, rendered him slow; hastened his march on receiving intelligence of the king's death\*. He arrived on the

third

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\* Davila, usually so exact, and on whose authority we may rely with an almost implicit faith, expressly asserts, " That the prince of Condé was condemned to be beheaded before the royal palace, previous to Francis the second's apoplectic seizure; and that the execution of the sentence was only delayed, in hopes to draw Montmorenci and his sons into the net, and to involve the king of Navarre in the same common destruction." So that the Constable's delays appear to have been chiefly instrumental to Condé's preservation. We cannot help being amazed at the bold, and nearly successful plan, of the Duke of Guise and Cardinal of Lorrain; thus at one blow to cut

1560. third day after that event, accompanied by  
 six hundred horse; and making use of the  
 authority which his high charge conferred,  
 he drove the guards from the gates of the  
 city; threatening to hang them up instantly  
 if they kept the king invested in full peace, in  
 the centre of his kingdom\*.

Meanwhile

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cut off by a solemn and public trial, two princes of the blood, and the first officer of the crown. Nor can we contemplate with less astonishment, the sudden and critical nature of Francis's disorder and decease. It is impossible to calculate the consequences that might have resulted to France, from the prolongation of his life, even for a few months, when we reflect on the events that were in agitation at the time of his death.

\* Davila says, that Montmorenci suspected the intentions of the Guises to such a degree, that no invitations or artifices could allure him to venture himself in their power. He returned from Paris to Chantilli, under pretence of the gout; and when he began his journey a second time, he purposely delayed his progress, on the plea of his advanced age and infirmities.

His sons pressing him to hasten to court, and assuring him that the Guises and the queen-mother would equally dread offending him; he replied, that "those in whose power the government then was vested, would act as they pleased; that the states-general could not be assembled without some cause; and that a little time  
 " would

Meanwhile the prince of Condé almost miraculously escaped, in the midst of these unexpected changes, Francis's death having at once unloosed his fetters. With a magnanimity and courage becoming himself, he not-

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“ would unfold all these dark and mysterious proceedings.”

Nothing could have been more artful and masterly, than the address which the queen-mother exerted, in flattering and gaining over the Constable, whom she termed the arbitrator and moderator of all things. Loyalty to his sovereigns, and unshaken allegiance to the throne, were the leading features of Montmorenci's character, on which Catherine relied.—When he arrived at the palace, where the young king, Charles the ninth, resided, at Orleans; after doing homage to his new sovereign with tears in his eyes, he exhorted him not to be disturbed at the present commotions, since he himself, and all good Frenchmen, were ready to lay down their lives for the preservation of the crown and kingdom. Catherine then entered into a long conversation with him; and by those blandishments of which she was so complete a mistress, worked upon his feelings of public spirit, and of regard to the interests of the state, till the Constable, won over to her purposes, consented to be the common mediator between the princes of Bourbon and the Guises. Catherine, while she secured by this means the regency for herself, attached Montmorenci to her son, independently of either of the two great factions.

1560. notwithstanding refused to quit his prison, till he knew who had been his prosecutors and accusers ; but no person dared to avow himself as such. The Guises declared that every step relative to his prosecution, had been taken by the late king's express and particular command ; but they did not produce the royal order, in consequence of which measures so violent had been pursued. Thirteen days afterwards the prince quitted Orleans, accompanied as a mark of honor, by those very soldiers who had served as his guard ; retiring first to Ham in Picardy, and thence to La Fere, both which places belonged to his brother Anthony, king of Navarre.

## CHAP. X.

*Reflections on the situation of affairs, at the accession of Charles the ninth.—Catherine of Medicis secures to herself the regency.—Formation of the “Triumvirate.”—Pernicious policy of the regent.—Assembly of the states.—Massacre of Vassy.—Duplicity of Catherine.—The young king is conducted to Paris, by Anthony king of Navarre.—Commencement of the civil wars.—Prince of Condé declared chief of the Hugonots.—Vain attempts to produce an accommodation.—Siege of Rouen.—Death of the king of Navarre.—Battle of Dreux.—Consequences of that action.—Siege of Orleans.—Assassination of the Duke of Guise.—Account of the circumstances attending it.—His funeral, and character.—Conclusion of Peace.—Death of La Cipierre.—Character of the Marechal de Retz.—The prince of Condé's amours, and second marriage.—Charles the ninth attains to majority.—Administration of Catherine.—Interview of Bayonne.—Commencement of the second civil war.—Ineffe-  
fectual enterprize of Meaux.—Battle of St. Denis.—Death of the Constable Montmorenci.—*

*Circumstances of that event.—Character of the young king.—Second pacification.*

1560. THE extraordinary circumstances in  
Dec. which Charles the ninth succeeded to the crown of France, his childhood, and the fermentation which pervaded the kingdom; all seemed to presage the future evils which impended over the state. Scarcely, in fact, do the annals of any modern nation present us with a reign, producing events of a more disastrous nature. Religion, prostituted to the purposes of interest or policy, served as an ostensible pretext to cover the ambition, and the other causes, which conspired to involve the country in the calamities of civil war. It is not possible even to relate these facts, without feeling emotions of horror, or of commiseration. That inveterate animosity, and sanguinary spirit, which peculiarly characterize theological disputes, actuated and inflamed the whole community. All the provinces became in turn the theatre of insurrection and rapine: while the massacre of St. Bartholomew, an act without parallel, terminates the recital. Every object of foreign acqui-

acquisition, or of domestic regulation and improvement, were obliterated ; and France during this humiliating period of its annals, instead of carrying her arms beyond the Alps or the Pyrenees, becomes almost a blank among the great European powers.

1560.

The young king, Charles the ninth, who ascended the throne in this critical and perilous juncture, was as yet of an age too tender to interfere personally in the administration of public affairs ; and could not, during many years, extend any effectual redress to the accumulated misfortunes of the state. The regency therefore devolved on his mother, whose talents, if they had been under the guidance of virtue, were equal to the emergency. But, Catherine, only anxious to lengthen the term of her son's minority, and of her own regency ; ever intent on projects for the enlargement and the continuance of that authority with which she was invested ; made it her primary study to sow division and discord among the principal nobility. Opposing, with Italian refinement, one party against another ; negligent of the public tranquillity, and solely attentive to her own pri-

1560. vate interests ; she sacrificed every moral consideration to her love of power. Even the parental feelings of a mother could impose no limits on this passion ; and Charles, tho' her son, yet, from the moment that he conceived the desire of reigning without her aid, was regarded by her as an enemy. During several years however she could not have this event to dread ; Francis the second's premature end, together with the peculiar circumstances of the times, having placed her by common consent in the first post of government. The Dec. 13. states, assembled at Orleans, were opened with a speech from the Chancellor l'Hopital, in which he exhorted them to toleration, unanimity, and an oblivion of past dissensions. Counsels the most wise and salutary, if they had not been impracticable, from the furious zeal of contending parties !

Some attempts were nevertheless made, while the states-general were sitting, to deprive the queen-mother of the regency, which she had assumed by a sort of political violence, and to confer it on the king of Navarre : but the weakness of Anthony, and Catherine's own address, soon extinguished all appearance

pearance of opposition. She then dissolved 1560.  
the assembly, whose deliberations she justly  
feared might tend to attack, or diminish the  
prerogatives of the crown; after having con-  
voked them to meet anew at the town of  
Poissy in the vicinity of Paris, during the  
ensuing month of May.

The court having removed from Orleans to 1561.  
Feb  
Fontainbleau, Louis, prince of Condé, repaired  
thither with a slender train. Desirous of  
justifying himself from the imputations cast  
upon him in the late reign, he demanded per-  
mission to prove his innocence before the  
king, which was granted: the Chancellor  
pronounced him guiltless of the crimes laid to  
his charge, and he was re-admitted to take  
his seat in council.

Neither depressed by the elevation of their  
enemies, nor overcome by the unexpected  
reverse of fortune which had so recently be-  
fallen themselves, the princes of Lorrain ne-  
vertheless maintained their ground. Equally  
supporting, and supported by the ancient re-  
ligion, they not only preserved a prodigious  
influence in the court, but inspired appre-  
hension among their opponents. The king of  
Navarre, tho' invested with the title of Lieu-

1561. tenant-general of the kingdom, and aided by the Constable, as well as by the Colignys; attempted in vain to compel the Duke of Guise to relinquish his office of grand-master of the household: Anthony was himself reduced, after an ineffectual struggle, to renounce his pretension to that post.

Alarmed at so powerful a combination between the princes of the blood, Montmorenci, and his two nephews; the regent exerted herself to dissolve a confederacy, which she feared might affix limits to her own power. With this view, she endeavored to gain the Constable, who was long uncertain and irresolute with which party he should connect himself. His eldest son, Francis, Marechal de Montmorenci, esteemed one of the most prudent lords of the kingdom, and closely connected with the Hugonot party, endeavored to retain his father on that side. But, Henry d'Amville, his second son, whose influence over him was great; and Magdalen of Savoy, Montmorenci's wife, were attached to the opposite faction\*. Catherine, regardless what engines

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\* Henry, second son of the Constable Montmorenci, and the favorite of his father, was early distinguished by

engines she employed to effect her measures, 1561.  
and anxious to succeed in a negotiation which  
she considered as essential to the preservation  
of her own authority ; recalled Diana de Poi-

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by his courage ; and rose, after the extinction of the house of Valois, under Henry the fourth, to the dignity of Constable of France. Tho' illiterate, he was in the article of bodily accomplishments, one of the most distinguished noblemen of the courts of Henry the second, and of Francis his successor. After the death of the last of those princes, he followed Mary, queen dowager of France and queen of Scotland, when she returned into her own dominions. He was tenderly attached to her ; and Mary was so sensible to his passion, that it was commonly believed, had he been at liberty, she would have married him. When we reflect on the train of events which conducted that unfortunate princess to the scaffold, it is impossible not to consider how different her fate might have been, if she had married a son of the Constable Montmorenci, instead of Henry Darnley. But d'Amville had been already married in 1558, to Antoinette de la Marek, grand-daughter of the celebrated Duchess of Valentinois. His elder brother Francis dying without issue, Henry succeeded in 1579, to the vast possessions and titles of the house of Montmorenci. By Louisa de Budos, his second wife, he was father to Henry, last Duke of Montmorenci, equally amiable and unfortunate, who was put to death at Toulouse, by the Cardinal de Richlieu, after the combat of Castelnudari, in 1632.

1561. tiers again to court, and ordered her to try her powers of persuasion upon the Constable. The Duchess de Valentinois undertook, and successfully executed this delicate commission. Montmorenci declared at length in favor of the Guises ; and a private union of interests was established between the Duke, the Marechal de St. André, and himself, which, like those formed in antiquity, of a similar nature, obtained the name of “ the Triumvirate\*.”

The

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\* This negotiation was the last public act of the celebrated Duchess of Valentinois ; and she again retired, after giving so signal a proof of her influence over Montmorenci, to the castle of Anet. She survived it about five years, dying in the sixty-seventh year of her age, on the 26th of April, 1566. Her body reposes under a marble Mausoleum, in the centre of the choir of the great chapel of Anet, which she had herself constructed. She forms the most extraordinary instance of personal beauty preserved even into the winter of life, which occurs in modern history ; unless Ninon de l'Enclos may be supposed to constitute an exception.—It was however, by no means the intention of the queen-mother, in detaching the Constable from Anthony, king of Navarre, and his own nephews, the Colignys, to force him to so strict a union with the house of Guise and the Marechal de St. André. She had

The ceremony of Charles's coronation, 1561.  
which these political intrigues and disputes ~~May 15.~~  
had hitherto delayed, was at length performed  
at Rheims, with the accustomed magnificence.  
But, the evils produced by the weakness of the  
crown, and by the want of a sovereign of full  
age, possessing vigor of mind, who might co-  
erce the various factions which struggled for  
superiority, admitted of no remedy: while  
Catherine's ambiguous conduct, which tended  
to spread universal jealousy and distrust, in-  
creased and irritated the public disorders.  
Fearful that she might be oppressed by the  
superior power of the three great united lords,  
which union she had herself labored to effect;  
and incapable of detaching them from their  
new confederacy, she attempted to balance  
their political weight, by forming another co-

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had hoped to attach Montmorenci to herself, and to the  
young king her son, independently of either of the  
great factions; but she was deceived in this expecta-  
tion. The union of "the Triumvirate" was studiously  
concealed from Catherine, who dreaded and trembled  
at that powerful combination.—Davila and De Thou  
equally agree in their account of the principal facts  
respecting this transaction.

alition

1561. alition of equal importance. In consequence of this determination, she immediately made proposals to the king of Navarre, for establishing a more close and intimate alliance between them, which might conduce to their common support. Anthony gladly embraced these offers; but, at the same time that in compliance with her promises to him, she affected to protect and favor the reformed religion, she secretly prevailed on the Constable to complain of those very innovations. Not sufficiently powerful to annihilate, or to compress by force the numerous parties which convulsed the country, she substituted cunning and artifice in its stead: but her abilities, tho' great, and equal to almost every undertaking, yet fell short of effecting this purpose. After having fomented the sparks of civil discord, she vainly flattered herself that she could extinguish them at pleasure, or direct their fury: when once kindled, they involved the crown and the kingdom in one general conflagration.

As yet, nevertheless, no party had taken up arms; and Catherine, always affecting to unite the chiefs of the conflicting factions, tho'

tho' she deprecated their union, was emi-  
nently instrumental in producing a recon-  
ciliation which took place about this time,  
between the Duke of Guise and the prince  
of Condé. After having embraced in the  
royal presence, they made professions of the  
most sincere and cordial amity \*. The king

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\* Mezerai says, that the Constable was the author of this pretended reconciliation; because, conceiving it unbecoming his own character and honor, openly to ally himself with the Duke of Guise, while the prince of Condé was that nobleman's enemy, he requested of the queen-mother to undertake the accommodation of their differences.

The young king in consequence having commanded their attendance at St. Germain-en-Laye, where the court then resided, ordered them mutually to forget their past animosities. The Duke of Guise protested that he had not advised the imprisonment of the prince of Condé; who replied, that " whosoever was the per-  
" son from whom that advice came, he regarded him  
" as a villain and a traitor." The Duke answered, that he was equally of that opinion, and that the prince's observation no way affected him. This scene having been acted, they embraced; and the king enjoined them to observe in future a strict and cordial friendship. Catherine then invited them both to a magnificent entertainment, which she gave as a testimony of her satisfaction at this auspicious event.

of

1561. of Navarre, on the other hand, who might have compelled the queen-mother to yield to his superior rights as first prince of the blood, was so weak as to renounce his claim to the regency. Catherine, who intimately knew the human heart, and addressed herself to its passions, had contrived to govern him by a new allurement, peculiarly calculated to retain him in her obedience. Mademoiselle du Rouet, one of the most beautiful of her maids of honor, served as an instrument to her mistress's ambition, by rivetting the chains of Anthony ; and her ascendancy over a temper, yielding, voluptuous, and indolent like his, was only extinguished with his life.

August. The states-general meanwhile were opened with great solemnity at St. Germain ; the young king, tho' only eleven years of age, seated on his throne, with the queen-mother, and his sister the princess Margaret on his left hand, being present at the debates. As the Admiral Coligny had been principally instrumental in prevailing upon the king of Navarre not to contest the regent's power, she in return for that important service, avowedly patronized

patronized the Calvinistical doctrines and followers. This affected favor towards them, the result, not of conviction, but of profound hypocrisy, was equally displayed by Catherine on another occasion. An ecclesiastical assembly was summoned to meet at the town of Poissy, for the purpose of reconciling the religious differences which subsisted between the Catholics and Hugonots. The Cardinal of Lorrain on one side, and Theodore Beza on the other, declaimed with equal violence and eloquence, in defence of their respective tenets : but no measures productive of benefit to the state, resulted from these discussions or harangues, which inflamed, instead of allaying, the animosities of the respective parties.

Disgusted at the loss of their political credit, as well as irritated at the preference shewn to the Hugonots ; and covering their dissatisfaction at Catherine's conduct, under the specious pretext of attachment to their religion ; "the Triumvirate" quitted the court. Still however attentive to their common interests, they exerted every insidious artifice which might win the king of Navarre, and finally

1561. finally bring him over to their party. The Guises first proposed to him a divorce from his wife, Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, on pretence of heresy, that princess having professed the reformed opinions: and they promised him the hand of their niece, the young queen dowager, Mary of Scotland. But, finding that from parental attachment to his son Henry, prince of Bearn, he disapproved and rejected this offer, they substituted another, more agreeable to his inclinations. Philip the second was asserted to have empowered them, to cede to Anthony the island of Sardinia, in compensation for the Spanish kingdom of Navarre, unjustly withheld by the kings of Spain, since its original conquest by Ferdinand of Arragon. Anthony, deceived by this ideal advantage, which Philip never meant to realize, at length united himself to his natural enemies, and became the dupe of their artifices, in contradiction no less to his honor, than to his real interests\*.

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\* It is principally to Davila that we must have recourse, in pervading this chaos of opposite and continually shifting measures, for any clear or certain explanation.

The voluntary retreat of “the Triumvirate” having left the prince of Condé and Coligny

1561.  
Jan.

explication of the sources, from which sprung the different actions related.—According to that great historian, who appears to have traced beyond any other writer, the silent workings of the heart; Anthony's change of conduct, in joining the Triumvirs, is not to be attributed, in any degree, either to religious, or to patriotic motives. Interest, ambition, and rivalship, were his sole directing principles; to which his constitutional indolence, and pacific temper, added strength. His partiality to the Calvinistical tenets, appears to have been shaken at the dispute of Poissy, on account of the little agreement which he found in the ministers of that persuasion, on the articles of belief, and their reasons of dissention from the Romish church. He was moreover offended with the behavior of the Admiral Coligny, who affected, and attempted, to govern him in every particular; but, above all, he was incensed at the preference given to his brother among the Re-formers. The prince of Condé's open detestation of the Guises; his distinguished personal courage, and his avowed protection of the Hugonots, had made him in reality the hero of the party. The king of Navarre's interests were likewise very different, as he was the first prince of the blood, and might entertain no very distant or chimerical hopes of succeeding to the crown. All these reasons account for his confederacy with the Guises.

1562. Coligny undisputed masters of the court for the time, Catherine issued a new edict, highly favorable to the Hugonots. Affecting even to regulate the principal measures of her administration by their advice, she gave them every mark of perfect confidence: but these encouraging appearances, only calculated to deceive, were speedily followed by the most

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De Thou, tho' he does not analyze with the same accuracy and perspicuity as Davila, the motives to Anthony's conduct, yet accounts for it upon similar principles. He adds, that Manriquez, the Spanish ambassador, who was instructed by his court, to deceive the king of Navarre with false promises and expectations, effected his purpose by flattering or corrupting the two favorites of that prince; Lenoncourt, bishop of Auxerre, and d'Escars. They engaged to endeavor to induce him to declare himself protector of the Catholic religion in France; in return for which service, Philip was to put him in possession of the kingdoms of Sardinia and Tunis. Anthony, completely deceived by these flattering prospects, entered into the closest union with "the Triumvirate."—Jane d'Albret, his wife, queen of Navarre in her own right, no sooner found that he had openly abandoned the party and religion of the Calvinists, than she immediately withdrew from the court of France. Carrying with her Henry and Catherine her children, she retired into Bearn, where she educated them in the doctrines of the Reformation.

alarming

alarming convulsions. The queen, who had favored the Calvinist party, not from pre-dilection, but solely from her apprehensions of the tyranny which “the Triumvirate” would exercise over her; had no sooner driven them from court, than she dreaded becoming the victim of her own machinations, by the elevation of their enemies. She endeavored, therefore, to mollify and conciliate the Guises, who, she well knew, tho’ they had withdrawn themselves for a short interval, waited only an opportunity to resume their authority. Condé and Coligny, informed of the queen’s duplicity, and aware how little confidence could be placed in her promises, prepared to ward off the dangers with which they plainly saw that they were menaced. Anticipating the hostilities which they conceived to be imminent and inevitable, they already applied to the Protestant princes of the Germanic empire, and received from them assurances of support.

While the public tranquillity reposed upon such precarious foundations, the Duke of Guise, at the pressing instances of his friends, and particularly of the king of Na-

1562. varre, set out on his return to court ; when an unfortunate accident which happened on the way, accelerated the rupture between the two factions. During the time that he stopt at the little town of Vassy in Champagne, and was employed in hearing the celebration of mass, March 1st. a croud of Calvinists, who were assembled in a barn, interrupted and disturbed the ceremony by their hymns. A dispute arising between the duke's domestics and the Hugonots, he eagerly interposed, with a view to prevent the consequences ; but in this attempt he received a blow upon the cheek with a stone. His attendants seeing his face bloody, instantly drew their swords, and killed above fifty, besides near two hundred others, who were wounded in the fray\*.

The

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\* If we may credit Davila, the Duke of Guise had no intention to injure or molest the Hugonots, while occupied in an act of their religion : and the account which he gives of this unfortunate massacre, inclines us to imagine that the Duke regretted, and exerted every endeavor to prevent the scene of blood which took place. It appears that he was on his way from Joinville to Paris, accompanied by his brother the Cardinal, a train of gentlemen, and an escort of two hundred

The prince of Condé, who had accompanied the young king and court to the palace of

1562.

hundred lances ; when the unusual noise of bells, as he passed thro' the village of Vassy, incited the pages and lacqueys to advance, partly from curiosity, and partly from derision, to the spot from whence the ringing proceeded. A congregation of Calvinists being there assembled, and hearing that their great enemy, the Duke of Guise, was in the town, some of them began the dispute by throwing stones at his attendants ; who instantly betook themselves to their arms, and a dangerous quarrel ensued. The Duke no sooner received intelligence of it, than spurring his horse into the croud, he reprehended his followers, and entreated of the Hugonots to retire ; when a blow from a stone, which struck him on the left cheek, and which caused a considerable effusion of blood, compelled him to quit the place. His attendants, irritated at the wound which their lord had received, attacked the house into which the Hugonots had retreated for security ; killed above sixty of them, and severely wounded the minister, who escaped with his life by climbing over the tiles into one of the adjoining houses. When the slaughter was over, the Duke summoning the magistrate of the place into his presence, severely reprimanded him for permitting these licentious and illegal assemblies of the people. On his attempting to justify himself, by pleading the royal edict lately issued in favor of the Calvinists : the Duke laying his hand

1562. ~~of~~ of Monceaux near Meaux, having immediately demanded justice and reparation for the massacre.

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on his sword, replied angrily, “ This shall soon cut “ the bond of that edict, tho’ ever so strong.”

De Thou’s narration of the massacre of Vassy, differs in some material circumstances from that of Davila ; peculiarly in that leading feature of it, which exculpates the attendants of the Duke of Guise.—De Thou, on the contrary, it must be owned with more probability, charges them expressly with having commenced the fray, by riding up, and insulting the Hugonots, who were assembled at their devotions, with every injurious and opprobrious epithet : but he allows, that the Duke himself exerted every possible endeavor, tho’ unfortunately to no purpose, to stop the fury of his followers and servants. He draws a very affecting picture of the unhappy wretches, who were victims on this occasion to the merciless rage of the Duke’s attendants : women and children, who made the air echo with their cries, were fired upon till none remained alive to satiate their vengeance. The minister, named Leonard Morel, was wounded, as were two hundred others, and sixty were killed upon the spot.

De Thou seems to impute in some degree this carnage, to the Duchess dowager of Guise, Antoinette de Bourbon, mother of the Duke and Cardinal ; whose residence being in the neighbourhood of Vassy, she had frequently complained to her son the Duke, of the meetings of the Calvinists so near her castle, and had requested

massacre ; Catherine, distressed at this peremptory requisition, promised ample satisfaction to the prince. She issued an order to the king of Navarre, as Lieutenant-general of the kingdom, commanding him to provide for the safety of her son and of the state ; enjoined the Duke of Guise to repair instantly to her, without attendants ; and commanded the Marechal de St. André to return without delay to his government of Lyons. But the power of the regent was ineffectual to enforce obedience. Not one

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requested him to deliver her from such a scandal.—Very different, adds this great historian, was the conduct of the young Duchess of Guise, Anne d'Esté, who had derived from her mother, Renée, daughter to Louis the twelfth, a partiality towards the Calvinists. She followed the Duke her husband, in a litter ; and hearing the cries of the unhappy people, she instantly apprehended the cause of it, and dispatched a messenger to her husband, to implore mercy for the Huguenots. The Duke had already rode up to the spot, and was exerting himself to terminate the quarrel, when the wound which he received on his cheek, gave an immediate loose to the violence of his attendants.—These are the principal circumstances of this unfortunate massacre, from whence we may date the origin of the civil wars that followed.

1562. of the three yielded submission to her injunctions. Anthony repulsed the Hugonot deputies with threats, who were sent to lay before him their complaints: the Duke of Guise replied, that he had no leisure to come as yet to court, being otherwise employed: and St. André, still more insolent, informed her majesty to her face, that in the present critical situation of affairs, he could not abandon the person of his sovereign.

The Duke of Guise arriving soon after at Paris, attended by twelve hundred horse, was received with acclamations by the populace. Terrified at his approach, and dreading lest he should, in conjunction with the other confederates, deprive her altogether of the supreme management of affairs; the queen had recourse to a measure the most pernicious in itself, as well as productive of future calamities to France. She wrote to the prince of Condé, who had retired to his own house; recommending to him, in terms so touching and pathetic, herself, the kingdom, and her son, whom the combined nobles held in captivity; that she thereby afforded him the most plausible pretence for arming

arming his associates, in order to liberate the regent. He availed himself of these letters, to excuse his proceedings ; but finding his adherents too few in number, to venture on opposing enemies so numerous and powerful, he withdrew a second time to his country seat near Meaux.

The queen meanwhile, accompanied by the March. Chancellor, had carried the young king to Fontainbleau. Beholding the prospect of a civil war in full view, which her own ambiguous and interested policy, directed solely to preserve the authority of regent, had greatly conduced to accelerate ; she was still desirous to try every means in her power, for averting so great an evil. Her own interests impelled her to prevent the effusion of blood ; and, conscious that her junction with either party must be the signal of open hostility, she anxiously hoped, by remaining in a state of neutrality, to hold the balance : but this temporizing line of policy, however specious in appearance, was become impracticable. The Duke of Guise, with a prodigious train, calculated to inspire terror, having arrived at Fontainbleau, and being followed by Montmorenci ;

1562. ~~morenci~~; Catherine again summoned the prince of Condé secretly to her assistance. Flattering herself that his presence would restore her to freedom, and render her the common arbitress; she thus may be said to have raised with her own hand, the standard of insurrection in France.

Faithful to the summons, the prince appeared immediately in arms, and passed the river Seine at St. Cloud, in his way to join her. Tho' his forces were too few in number, to terrify the confederate lords, they instantly availed themselves of the occasion, to render them masters of the king's person; which act of violence they pretended was necessary, in order to prevent his falling into the hands of the Hugonots. The king of Navarre brought the regent this melancholy intelligence; and Catherine hesitating, Anthony informed her that he was come to conduct his sovereign to Paris, where he would be in safety; adding with a sort of brutality, that "if she did not chuse to accompany him, she might remain alone." He even allowed her no time to deliberate upon this important and decisive measure. Charles himself, too young to

to oppose the violence offered him, turned 1562. towards his mother, as if to know her sentiments : she dared not utter a word ; while the young king, bursting into tears of impotent resentment and indignation, suffered himself to be conducted weeping to Melun, and from thence to the capital\*.

No

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\* Davila has given the most satisfactory and interesting detail of Catherine's conduct during this whole transaction. It is beyond a doubt, that she yielded to a force which she was unable to resist ; and that she exerted every artifice to induce the king of Navarre and " the Triumvirate" to leave herself and the young king at liberty. She even used so many powerful arguments to incline them to permit her to remain at Fontainbleau, where the court would at least have had the appearance of being free ; that the king of Navarre and the Constable were on the point of yielding to her entreaties, if the Duke of Guise had not dissuaded them from any such compliance.

De Thou asserts, that in a council which was held by " the Triumvirs," the Marechal de St. André proceeded to such lengths of violence, as to propose to throw the queen-mother into the Seine, if she should dare to oppose or impede the journey to Paris. He adds, that Catherine had prepared a boat, in which she meant to carry off her son Charles the ninth during the night, previous to their departure from Fontainbleau ;

1562. No alternative, except open war, appeared to remain to the prince of Condé. Deceived, as he apprehended, by the queen, seeing his enemies in possession of the king's person, and considering himself as already proscribed; he judged it too late to retract, or even to suspend his enterprize. Advancing therefore

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bleau; but that she found it impossible to deceive the vigilance of Montmorenci.—“ The queen-mother,” says Davila, “ perceiving it vain to attempt any resistance to the peremptory requisition of the Catholic lords and of Anthony, instantly resolved to yield with grace. Mounting therefore on horseback, with the king, and her two younger sons, being surrounded by “ the Triumvirate” and their attendants, they reached Melun that night; from whence they proceeded on the following day, to the Bois de Vincennes, and arrived on the third day at Paris.” The young king, continues Davila, was seen by many to weep on that occasion, being conscious that he was treated as a prisoner. The regent, perplexed in mind, foreseeing a civil war, and finding all her projects overthrown, spoke not a word, but observed a gloomy silence: while the Duke of Guise, regardless of the king's tears, or of the queen-mother's distress, was heard publicly to say, that “ the good is always good, whether it proceed from love, or from force.”—These are the most interesting circumstances of that memorable transaction.

with

with the utmost expedition towards Orleans, 1562. accompanied by two thousand cavairy, he rendered himself master of that city, after a ~~April 2.~~ vigorous opposition\*.

Conscious

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\* Louis, prince of Condé, was only at a small distance from the court, when intimation arrived of the Catholics having carried Charles the ninth to Paris. Astonished at this intelligence, the prince checked his horse, remaining a considerable time motionless, and silent. He perceived the critical situation in which he stood, while all the troubles and disasters of civil war rose before his imagination. He had not yet passed the Rubicon.—As he revolved in his mind these considerations, Coligny, who was at some distance behind, overtaking him, they conferred together for a few minutes. At length, the prince seeming to have taken his ultimate resolution, after a deep sigh exclaimed ; “ Affairs are arrived at such a pass, that it is necessary for us to drink, or to be drowned !” So saying, he proceeded instantly towards Orleans, at the head of near three thousand horse : and as d’Andelot, Coligny’s brother, had already attempted to render himself master of that city, in which endeavor he was vigorously opposed by Montereau, the governor ; the alarm was communicated for many miles every way, by the incessant firing, and ringing of the bells. Condé redoubling his speed, on hearing these proofs of the attack made by d’Andelot, pushed on his cavalry at full stretch,

1552. Conscious that the measure which he had  
embraced, was decisive and irretrievable, he  
proceeded to form military and civil regula-  
tions for the conduct of his followers; and as  
in war only, his future safety could be found,  
he neglected no precautions becoming the  
leader of a party, to ensure success. He  
was proclaimed chief of the Hugonots by  
unanimous consent: in the manifesto pub-  
lished by the prince, the pretext for their  
having taken up arms, was declared to be  
the release of the king and his mother, from  
the captivity in which they were held by  
“the Triumvirate;” and he immediately dis-  
patched messengers to the German Protes-  
tant princes, requesting their aid in the com-  
mon cause of religion.

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stretch, till he reached the gates of Orleans; where  
he arrived at a most critical moment, as d'Andelot,  
overpowered by numbers, was on the point of retreat-  
ing without success. The unexpected arrival of the  
prince, at the head of such a body of cavalry, decided  
the fortune of the day, and rendered him master of  
Orleans.—It is Davila who relates these interesting  
particulars of the commencement of the civil wars.

'The

The capture of Orleans served as the signal of insurrection thro'out the whole kingdom. The Hugonots, excited by their leader's example, having expelled in many places the Catholics; the important cities of Rouen, Blois, Poitiers, Tours, and Lyons, fell into their hands: but their ungovernable zeal carried them every where to the most violent and sanguinary excesses. Animated with the enthusiasm commonly characteristic of new and oppressed sects, they respected no places or professions, however sacred: while the prince of Condé in vain attempted to restrain these licentious practices, as he was neither heard nor obeyed in the fury of religious animosity.

The Chancellor l'Hopital, who alone in this tumultuous and melancholy period, seems to have preserved his mind untainted with the general asperity of the times, still continued his exertions to avert hostilities. He beheld France ready to be plunged into a civil war, heightened by every circumstance of mutual hatred, and of inveterate antipathy. Anxious, if possible, to prevent so great a misfortune, he prevailed on the queen to exert her endeav-

1562. vors for an accommodation\*. Catherine, who wished it with equal ardor, tho' from motives of a much less disinterested nature, eagerly seized the occasion of interposing to stop the further effusion of blood. The prince of Condé was already in possession of nearly half the kingdom; and she justly dreaded, lest, if the confederates should imitate the precedent, the young king might be finally left

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\* Davila and De Thou, who perfectly coincide on this point, assert that the Chancellor exerted every possible endeavor to prevent and avert a civil war. When the king of Navarre and “the Triumvirate” had secured the person of Charles the ninth, by conducting him to Paris, they summoned a council at the palace of the Louvre, where the Duke of Guise proposed to declare war upon the prince of Condé and the Hugonots. De l’Hopital opposed this violent measure very strongly; and the Constable having remarked, that the question in agitation before them, was not of the resort of persons of the long robe; the Chancellor replied, that “if he and those of his profession were “not acquainted with the art of making war, they at “least perfectly well knew under what circumstances “it could be made with equity.”—In consequence of this upright and spirited answer, the Chancellor was excluded from the further deliberations of the council of state, and the most violent resolutions were embraced in that assembly.

between

between the two factions, without places, revenue, or dominions. 1562.

Stimulated by considerations so forcible to an ambitious mind, she undertook the arduous task of conciliating the rival parties. Not discouraged by ill success, and conscious of her own talents for negotiation, she made repeated attempts to detach the prince of Condé from Coligny and the body of the Hugonots. More than once her address and persuasions had nearly proved successful: she allured him by the most seducing proposals, promised that "the Triumvirate" should quit the court, and that a general freedom of religious sentiment and worship should be granted to his followers. An interview for the purpose of personal explanation, took place between the prince and the queen-mother, at June: Toury near Orleans; and tho' it proved unsuccessful, Catherine still continued her unremitting efforts to produce an accommodation\*.

Acting

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\* The queen-mother, by the mediation and endeavors of the bishop of Valence, having induced the prince of Condé to agree to a conference at Toury, a small place about ten leagues from Orleans; they met

1562. Acting in person, not thro' the medium of  
delegates; perfect mistress of all the arts which  
can

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on the day appointed. The king of Navarre accompanied Catherine, and each party was escorted by thirty-six horsemen: Henry d'Amville, the Constable's second son, commanding the escort of the queen; and the count de la Rochefoucauld, that of the prince. In order to prevent any quarrel, the two bands were stationed at eight hundred paces from the town, and they remained more than half an hour, without moving from their respective posts. But, gradually approaching, they at length joined; and embracing with warmth, they mutually lamented the hard destiny which thus armed them against each other, and which pointed their weapons against themselves. A more affecting spectacle, or one more calculated to display the fatal spirit and effects of civil discord, history has scarcely ever commemorated!

Meanwhile Catherine, the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, held a conference of two hours, during which the queen affected the greatest concern at her inability to comply with Condé's demands. Anthony, on the contrary, treated his brother with severity, and rejected all his propositions for peace, with the utmost asperity. The interview terminating ineffectually, only served to exasperate the two princes of Bourbon against each other. De Thou is very minute in his relation of all the circumstances of this conference: Davila is more succinct in his account of it;

can operate on the human mind ; attacking the heart and its favorite propensities, no less than the understanding ; she at length engaged the prince to promise that he would quit the kingdom, if his enemies consented to relinquish the administration. “ The Tri-  
“ umvirs,” from whom she had previously obtained an assurance to that effect, instantly fulfilled it, by retiring to the town of Chateau-Dun. Catherine having therefore summoned the prince to the observance of his agreement, he affected obedience ; and a second interview took place between them at Talsy, only six miles distant from either camp, where Condé made his apparent submissions to Charles and to the queen. But Coligny, who reposed no confidence either in her honor, or in the good faith of “ the Trium-  
“ virs ;” and who beheld the Hugonots in the most extreme peril, if their chief abandoned them ; by his remonstrances and representations, stopped the conclusion of this treaty,

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it ; nor does he seem to have known or apprehended, that the king of Navarre was present at, and a party in the private conversation, which took place between Catherine and the prince of Condé.

1562, which was on the point of being accomplished, June 27, and conducted the prince back to his expecting partisans\*.

The

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\* Nothing can be more evident, than that neither "the Triumvirate," nor the Hugonot lords, whatever professions they might make, sincerely meant to terminate their differences by an accommodation. Davila, who is very exact as well as diffuse, in his delineation of the principles of conduct which animated each party, expressly asserts, that the whole plan was concerted between the prince of Condé and Coligny, previous to the visit made by the former to the queen-mother and the king, at Talsy. Nor do "the Triumvirs" appear to have been at all more sincere in their affected renunciation of power, and their voluntary secession from court: for, tho' they quitted the army, and left the person of the sovereign ostensibly free, yet they only removed to Chateau-Dun, five leagues from the royal camp, where they remained, with intent to watch the prince's conduct. Catherine had previously obtained a promise subscribed by Condé, in which he engaged to quit the kingdom, provided that "the Triumvirate" likewise retired from court, and laid down their authority.

This engagement, into which he had imprudently entered, on a presumption that his enemies never would accede to, nor fulfil their part of the conditions; had so far committed the prince of Condé, that it became impossible for him to refuse to venture his person, by paying his duty to the young king, and to the queen-mother.

The civil war which had been so long suspended by the queen's negotiations, now began in all its violence. The Duke of Guise and the Constable, who had only withdrawn to a short distance, being recalled in great haste, returned to the camp; and the royal army, in which were present the queen and her son Charles, immediately took the field. Little opposition was made to their progress by the forces of the insurgents. Blois, Tours, <sup>July</sup> & Bourges, which were successively taken, <sup>August</sup>.

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mother. He accordingly repaired, accompanied with a very slender escort, to Talsy; where, as the court had only the ordinary guards, he was under no apprehension of being detained by violence. A scene of mutual duplicity then took place; the queen urging the prince to leave the kingdom, at least for a short time; Condé procrastinating, and postponing any final determination. While this illusory negotiation was performing, Coligny, and the other great Hugonot chiefs arrived, as preconcerted, under pretence of paying their respects to the king. But, affecting indignation at the prince's too easy concessions, they hurried him away by violence, mounted him on horseback, and re-conducted him to their own camp.—De Thou agrees with Davila in most of these particulars; which, however, he relates in a manner less unfavorable to the prince of Condé and his party.

1562. were abandoned to plunder ; and it was de-  
Sept. 27. termined to form the siege of Rouen, one of  
the greatest and most commercial cities of  
the kingdom, capital of Normandy. Mont-  
gomeri, whose tournament with Henry the  
second has rendered him so famous in the  
annals of France, commanded in the place,  
and made a most vigorous defence. Honorable  
terms of capitulation were repeatedly  
offered him, which he as frequently refused.  
The queen, by the Chancellor's entreaties,  
three times prevented the Duke of Guise  
from storming the place : but, as the besieged  
rejected obstinately every proposal of accom-  
modation or surrender, it was at length per-  
mitted to make the assault\*. The city was  
carried

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\* Among the many great qualities which it must be admitted that Catherine of Medicis possessed, which are rarely found in women, may be ranked her courage. During the siege of Ronen, she went every day to the fort of St. Catherine, where the most bloody attacks were made : the Duke of Guise and the Constable remonstrating with her, on the danger to which she exposed her person ; " Why," answered she, " should I spare myself more than you ? Is it that I have less interest in the event, or less courage ? True, I have not

carried by the troops, and the pillage lasted 1562. two days without intermission. Montgomeri, <sup>Oct. 26.</sup> with a few desperate attendants, and a party of English whom Elizabeth had sent to his aid, escaped in a boat upon the river Seine, after having broken the chains which were stretched across the stream at Caudebec, between Rouen and Havre de Grace.

During the siege, Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, met with his death, having been wounded as he stood in the trenches, by a ball from a Harquebusse in the shoulder, on the very day intended for the assault. His <sup>Oct. 15.</sup> emulation of the Duke of Guise, and his own personal courage, impelled him constantly to be present in situations of danger. When the city was taken, tho' much indisposed, he caused himself to be carried by his Switzers thro' the breach, in a litter. His wound did not at first assume a dangerous appearance; but the pleasures in which he imprudently

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“ not your force of body, but I have equal resolution  
“ of mind!”—What grandeur of sentiment, had it  
been guided by principles of virtue! The soldiers gave  
her the title of “ *Mater Castrorum*,” in imitation of  
the Romans

1562. indulged himself with Mademoiselle du Rouet, his mistress, throwing his blood into a violent agitation, produced a fever. The uneasiness of his mind inducing him to embark upon the Seine, in hopes to reach the village of St. Maur near Paris, he was seized with a shivering and cold sweats, which announced his approaching end. The boat in which he was conveyed, stopping at Andely, he soon

Nov. 17. after breathed his last, at forty-two years of age. That characteristic irresolution which distinguished him thro' life, equally accompanied him in the article of death: he received the sacrament after the forms of the Roman Catholic communion; but his dying professions evinced his attachment to the Reformed religion. He ordered those who were around his bed, to carry his strictest injunctions to Jane, queen of Navarre, his wife, on no account to trust either herself or her children at court; to be ever upon her guard against treachery; and to fortify her places\*.

While

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\* Davila's account of Anthony's wound, and the circumstances of his decease, is somewhat different from that

While success attended on the royal arms before Rouen, the kingdom became a scene of

1562.

that of most other historians.—“ The king of Navarre,” says he, “ had gone out to reconnoitre the breach, “ when he received a musket-ball in his shoulder, “ which breaking the bone, and tearing the nerves, he “ dropped down upon the spot as dead. This accident obliged the commanders to delay the assault: “ the soldiers and attendants having carried him to his “ tent, the surgeons immediately dressed his wound, “ in presence of the young king, his mother, and all “ the generals. It was their unanimous opinion that “ he could not live, on account of the great size of the “ orifice, and the depth which the ball had entered.”

He makes no mention of Mademoiselle du Rouet; but says, “ That the king of Navarre not being able to “ support the extreme pain which he underwent, was “ resolute, notwithstanding the remonstrances and entreaties of his physicians, to remount the Seine to “ St. Maur, whither he was accustomed frequently to “ retire, on account of the purity and salubrity of the “ air. His brother the Cardinal of Bourbon, the “ prince of La Roche-sur-Yonne, Louis Gonzaga, “ and several other persons, Catholic and Hugonot, “ accompanied him: but he was scarcely arrived at “ Andely, when his fever, which the motion occasioned “ by his voyage, had irritated, increasing, he became “ delirious, and soon afterwards expired.”

Davila mentions his varying religious belief, even in the

1562. of desolation, rapine, and violence, thro' all the provinces; the contending parties, animated by civil and religious antipathy, being equally

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the article of death. He ever speaks of Anthony in terms of approbation, mixed with compassion; and says, that he was not calculated for the tempestuous scenes in which he was compelled to act a part. His candor, sincerity, and gentleness, were ill adapted to the universal dissimulation and fury, which characterized his associates in power. Davila adds, that his death happened at a time, when experience had so ripened and matured his judgment, that it would probably have produced events widely different from the ideas preconceived of him.

Brantome says, that he was of a fine stature, much superior in personal dignity and appearance, to any other prince of the house of Bourbon: he confirms Anthony's uncertainty and fluctuation between the two religions. De Thou describes very circumstantially every particular respecting the progress of his wound. The ball had pierced too deep into the king of Navarre's shoulder, to be found or extracted, tho' the surgeons made repeated incisions and attempts for that purpose. The flesh returned in great quantity, and closed up the orifice: he appeared, however, to be on his recovery, when on a sudden he was seized with a violent fever. New operations being performed, in order to cut away the flesh which had grown over the wound, a quantity of matter was found to have formed,

equally guilty of the most barbarous excesses. 1562.  
A minute recapitulation of these atrocities,  
would present a picture humiliating to human  
nature,

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formed, the discharge of which weakened, without giving him relief.

He continued, notwithstanding, adds De Thou, to flatter himself with the hope of a speedy recovery; feeding his imagination with the delusive prospect of possessing the island of Sardinia, which Philip the second had always held out as a bait to delude this easy prince. Entertainments, or play, occupied his time; and he kept constantly by his bedside a young lady, maid of honor to the queen, whom he passionately loved; and whom Catherine had intentionally placed about him, to serve as her instrument in governing the king of Navarre.

His two physicians, Vincent Lauro, and La Meziere, who were of different religious persuasions, endeavored, each of them, to influence the dying prince's mind and conduct. In compliance with the exhortations of the first, who was a Catholic, he received the Viaticum, and confessed himself at Rouen, in presence of the prince of La Roche-sur-Yonne. Yet, the queen coming to visit him, and advising him to hear some pious book read, he listened with great attention to the book of Job, which his Calvinist physician had brought. This man reproaching him with indifference for his tenets, Anthony assured him that if he recovered, he would publicly embrace the profession of

Luther-

1562. ~~the~~ nature, tho' the pen of history is compelled to record them for the instruction of future ages.

No. Louis, prince of Condé, at length took the field, with about twelve thousand men. In contradiction to the advice of Coligny and d'Andelot, he embraced the bold resolution of marching direct to Paris; expecting that the consternation which he should strike into the inhabitants and the queen, would reduce them to offer, or to accept, terms of accommodation. In this hope he nevertheless found

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Lutheranism, as established by the confession of Augsburg.

De Thou says, that during the time when La Meziere was reciting to Anthony, the prayers used by the Protestants for dying persons; the Cardinal of Bourbon, brother to the king of Navarre, remained at the other extremity of the boat: but, when he found the king approached his last moments, he brought in a Dominican monk, disguised in a secular habit. The expiring prince seemed for some instants, to listen to the discourse of the friar: then, suddenly turning to his Italian Valet-de-chambre, who was at his bed's head, he charged the servant to exhort the young prince of Bearn, his son, to preserve his loyalty and fidelity unshaken to the king of France; and soon afterwards he expired.

himself

himself deceived : Catherine, skilled in all the subtleties of delay and of negotiation, engaged him in repeated and fruitless conferences, only calculated to give the Parisians time to recover from the panic, into which they had been thrown by his sudden appearance. While she affected to tender him fallacious conditions of peace, she found means to seduce many of his bravest officers, and prevailed on them to quit his party. Condé, at length convinced how insidious and dangerous were all the regent's offers ; after several vain attempts upon the capital, decamped, and began his march Dec. 10. into Normandy. The royal army followed close upon his rear ; and, having come up with him unexpectedly near Dreux, a general engagement became unavoidable.

In this battle, the first that was fought Dec. 20. during the course of the civil wars, the Huguenots had in the beginning the whole advantage ; the impetuosity of their charge bearing down all opposition. The Constable, who commanded in chief on the other side, with that ill fortune which seemed constantly to accompany him in the field ; being wounded in the face with a pistol-ball, and his horse

falling

1562. falling under him, was taken prisoner. A part of the cannon of the royal army was seized, and the rout appeared to be universal. But, the Duke of Guise, calm and unruffled, soon changed the fortune of the day. Contemplating the disorder which had taken place, without alarm or discomposure, he waited for the decisive moment in which it might be effectually retrieved. Tho' he was never possessed of any military rank in the French service, higher than that of a captain of cavalry; his distinguished capacity as a commander, rendered him more respected by the soldiery than any general of the age. Observing that the Hugonots, who considered the victory gained, were dispersed, and already engaged in plunder, he attacked them, and put them instantly to flight. The prince of Condé, who disdained to turn his back, and was always found in the front of danger; being surrounded, was made prisoner by Henry d'Amville, the Constable's second son, after having been wounded in the right hand. Coligny rallying his forces, retired precipitately, under cover of the night; but so far was he from considering himself as defeated, that,

that he would have renewed the action on the ensuing day, if his German auxiliaries had not refused to obey his orders. Retreating therefore towards Orleans, unpursued by the Royalists, he carried along with him his captive, Montmorenci\*.

The

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\* It is evident from De Thou's description, that the prince of Condé was surprized, and in a great degree compelled to hazard a general action at Dreux. That historian agrees with Davila, in all the leading and important particulars of the engagement. Robert Stuart, who has been already mentioned in the reign of Francis the second, was the person who made the Constable Montmorenci prisoner. The Duke of Guise having recovered the honor of the day, and regained the battle, at a moment when the rout was universal in the royal camp ; the prince of Condé was in turn borne reluctantly away by his flying troops. But, his horse having been wounded in the leg, fell under him ; and while he was endeavoring to remount himself, d'Amville arrived, and compelled him to surrender.

Coligny made the most vigorous and repeated efforts to retrieve the day ; and after the unfortunate charge of the royal troops under St. André, in which that Marshal was taken prisoner and killed, he had nearly again obtained a victory. It was reserved for the Duke of Guise, a second time to tear the laurels from the Huguenot leaders. With consummate skill he attacked the

Admiral

1562. The possession of the field of battle, and the whole glory of the day, remained nevertheless

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Admiral in flank, who then yielding to the disparity of numbers, retreated slowly, in the best order, without quickening his ordinary march, and even carrying off two pieces of the royal cannon. The action lasted four hours; near eight thousand men being killed on both sides, of which number the Hugonots owned to have lost only three thousand.

The most exact detail of this celebrated engagement, is likewise to be found in Davila. He allows that the prince of Condé's negligence chiefly involved the Hugonots in the necessity of fighting; the Constable having taken advantage of his security and want of precaution, to pass the whole royal army over the river Eure by moon-light, on the preceding night. Coligny first discovered this error and its consequences, of which he sent immediate information to the prince; who might still have avoided a decisive action: but his great spirit would not permit him to retreat before the Catholics. The Admiral fought with dauntless resolution, and with his own hand laid dead upon the ground Gabriel de Montmorenci, fourth son to the Constable; as likewise the Count de Rœchefort. The Switzers alone remained firm and immovable, tho' they were surrounded and repeatedly charged by the whole Hugonot army. Davila attributes all the merit of the victory, very deservedly, to the Duke of Guise.

D'Andelot, one of the most intrepid chiefs in the Hugonot

theless undisputed to the Duke of Guise. 1562. ~~~  
But if the superior ability which he displayed during the action, gained him the applauses of the court, and the adoration of his troops; his subsequent treatment of the prince of Condé, was not less honorable to his character. The Duke, after receiving him with the utmost politeness, lodged him in his own tent, and even shared with him his bed, no other being procurable at the time. The prince himself is said to have afterwards declared, that during the whole night he could

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Hugenot army, had been obliged to retire from the field, being ill of an ague, which rendered it impossible for him to continue there, or to take any part in the action.—The prince of Condé, all covered with sweat and blood, was conducted by d'Amville to the Duke of Guise's tent at Blainville. It is impossible to read, without astonishment, that after having supped together, these two implacable enemies and rivals, the one of whom had nearly caused the other to lose his head on a scaffold, amicably divided the same bed.—These are some of the most interesting facts of the battle of Dreux, as enumerated by Davila; who however represents the victory on the one side, as having been more complete, and the defeat on the other, as more universal, than they appear to have been, as related by De Thou.

1562. ~~not~~ not close his eyes ; while the Duke, with his usual tranquillity, enjoyed the soundest sleep by his side. In this engagement fell the celebrated Marechal de St. André, one of “the “Triumvirate\*.”

During

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\* St. André, a polite and gallant nobleman, was much regretted by his party. Brantome has given us the minutest particulars of his death. The battle was already gained, says he, when intelligence arrived, that a body of four hundred Hugonot cavalry having rallied, prepared to renew the attack. St. André was mounted on a horse, which being exhausted with fatigue, fell in the onset, and had not strength to rise. At that moment, a gentleman on the opposite side, named Aubigné, or Bobigné, whose estate the Marechal enjoyed by confiscation, came up ; and discharging a pistol-ball thro' his head, instantly killed him. His body was not found till the next morning, in a ditch near the spot where he fell.

Davila only mentions very briefly, that the Marechal de St. André was mortally wounded ; but De Thou circumstantially relates the origin and cause of Bobigné's detestation and vengeance on that nobleman. His resentment appears to have been too justly founded, as St. André had repaid the deepest obligations conferred on him by Bobigné, with ingratitude, perfidy, and rapacity. After having availed himself of the pecuniary assistance of Bobigné to the greatest degree, he had the cruelty and the baseness to procure for his own use,

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During the beginning of the engagement, 1562.  
as the advantage appeared to be entirely on  
the prince of Condé's side, numbers of the  
royal army fled as far as Paris, where they  
spread the report of a total defeat. Such was  
the effect of this intelligence, in the capital,  
that the Duchess of Guise, who was usually  
attended by a prodigious crowd of courtiers  
and followers, remained for some hours almost  
alone. The queen-mother, prepared for every  
event, careless of the fate of religion, and  
viewing all objects thro' the medium of policy  
or of self-interest; received the information  
with perfect composure. In the anticipation  
of that triumph which the reformed doctrines  
and their adherents were likely to obtain over

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the confiscation of his effects: to this injury St. André  
even added personal indignities and insults. Bobigné,  
thus doubly affronted and degraded, having sworn re-  
venge, waited the opportunity of satiating it, which he  
fully obtained in the battle of Dreux. De Thou con-  
fesses that the Marechal, tho' adorned by nature and  
by fortune with their choicest presents, and tho' alike  
calculated to shine in the cabinet, or in the field; was  
become equally an object of hatred and contempt, by  
his profligacy, injustice, and insatiable avidity, to  
which vices he justly fell a victim.

1562. the Catholics ; and of the consequent abolition of the great ceremonies of the Romish worship, particularly of mass, which has always been performed in Latin ; she is reported to have said, with a degree of levity scarcely excusable on such a subject, in a Catholic princess, “ Well ! we must then henceforward pray to God in French ! ” Catherine appears to have felt the utmost indifference, on the supposition that she retained her possession of power, whether Condé or Guise ultimately prevailed ; whether the Catholic, or the Calvinistical doctrines obtained a final pre-eminence. Dreading the far greater abuse which “ the Triumvirs ” might make of their success, than would result from the ascendancy of the Hugonots ; when certain intelligence of the victory obtained by the royal forces arrived on the following day, she felt the deepest internal mortification : her discernment compelling her to foresee, that by establishing the Duke of Guise’s sole authority, she should be reduced to more complete subjection. Concealing nevertheless with profound dissimulation, her personal wishes and her feelings, she ordered public rejoicings to be

be made for the defeat of the Hugonots ; and 1562. conferred upon the Duke the supreme command of the army, with which he had already been invested by his troops.

Coligny, meanwhile, on whom his forces had likewise conferred the same military functions, passing the Loire at Beaugency, continued his retreat. Having left his brother d'Andelot in Orleans with two thousand men, under the apprehension of that city being speedily invested by the royalists ; he then marched into Normandy, where he expected to receive the supplies which Elizabeth, queen of England, had promised him, as protectress of the Protestant faith. After having waited upon the sea-coast during some weeks, in anxious suspense, hourly menaced by the clamors of his German auxiliaries, who loudly demanded their arrears ; the expected succors arrived under the conduct of the Count de Montgomery, who brought an ample supply of money, troops, artillery, and ammunition. This seasonable and critical reinforcement enabled the Admiral to maintain the contest, but without giving the superiority to the Calvinist party. On the contrary, the Duke of Guise,

Jan.

1563. notwithstanding the severity of the winter, and the strength of the city, determined without delay to commence the siege of Orleans. The queen-mother accompanied him, as she had done to that of Rouen; carrying with her the prince of Condé, who was shut up in the castle of Onzain, under the custody of d'Amville, by whom he had been made prisoner. D'Andelot, one of the most intrepid and experienced commanders of the age, animated by the important charge confided to his care, exerted every effort of courage and military skill to defend the place. But, the superior talents of the Duke, which thro'out his whole life, had been peculiarly conspicuous in the attack, as well as in the defence of cities; had already rendered him master of the bridge that extends across the river Loire, and likewise of the suburbs of the town. Coligny, fully occupied in reducing Normandy to subjection, was unable to march to his brother's relief, in time to have afforded him effectual aid; and Orleans, nearly reduced to extremity, must have surrendered in a few weeks, when the Duke of Guise's death rescued the Hugonots from their danger,

ger, and gave a new aspect to the affairs of France. 1563.

A private gentleman of Angoumois, named John Poltrot de Meré, was the author of this detestable assassination. Having been a professor of the Reformed religion, which he had afterwards pretended to renounce; the Duke received him with his accustomed courtesy and liberality of disposition. Poltrot, who had constant access to approach him, long watched for the favorable opportunity to give the blow. The Duke of Guise being accustomed to repair daily in person to visit the works, and to inspect the progress of the siege: returning in the evening, without his armor, on horseback, only attended by one gentleman; the assassin, who waited for him, discharged three balls into his left shoulder. Feb. 18. Every assistance of art was immediately procured, but in vain: he died at the end of eight days\*.

It

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\* Davila says, that the Duke was shot by Poltrot, on the 24th of February, in the evening, being the feast of St. Mathias; that the assassin was mounted on a swift jennet, and discharged three balls into his right shoulder,

1563. It is a singular fact, which excites astonishment, that the queen-regent, fearful lest she

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shoulder, all which passing thro' his body, laid him on the ground as dead. He agrees with Brantome, in many of the particulars respecting the Duke's death ; and adds, that he expired on the *third* day from that on which he received the wound.

De Thou coincides with the two writers already mentioned, as to all the leading facts. He is very minute in his account of Poltrot, mentioning many curious circumstances relative to that fanatic, which tend to exhibit in the strongest point of view, the atrocious spirit of the times, when ardent devotion and the most flagitious crimes were continually found united in the same person and character. In his interrogatory before the queen-mother and the principal lords of the court, Poltrot, among many other facts which he confessed, that strikingly evince the force of the gloomy and sanguinary enthusiasm by which he was actuated ; declared, that " only a few moments before he killed " the Duke of Guise, he had dismounted from his " horse in a neighbouring wood ; where, on his knees " he had urgently besought the Lord to turn his mind, " and to change his resolution, if it arose from the " suggestions of the evil spirit."—Many similar instances occur in the history of these melancholy times, when the human mind was under the dominion of the most inveterate errors, heightened and inflamed by the acrimony of religious differences. Jacques Clement,

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she should be suspected as instrumental or 1563.  
~~~ privy to his death, caused herself to be interrogated in his chamber, before his own family, and a number of the nobility. Poltrot had endeavored to secure himself by flight; but, after having wandered during the whole night, in the woods on horseback, he found himself in the morning at the bridge of Olivet, only a league from Orleans; where, exhausted with fatigue, entering a house, in

the Jacobin friar, who stabbed Henry the third ~~in~~ 1589, received the sacrament, and passed the day in prayer, previous to an act of regicide and assassination.

Brantome, who served under the Duke of Guise, and was at the siege of Orleans, has given the most minute account of the circumstances of this assassination. On the evening when the Duke was killed, says he, only Monsieur de Rostain accompanied him, and he had just passed the river in a little boat, which constantly waited for that purpose. Poltrot immediately fled on discharging his pistol; and affecting to be a pursuer of the assassin, cried out, “Take him! take him!”— The Duke perceiving himself dangerously wounded, only said, “L'on me devoit celle-la; mais je crois que “ce ne sera rien.” They carried him to his own quarters.

order

1563. order to repose himself, he was taken, while
asleep, by one of the Duke's secretaries.

When questioned with respect to the motives that had impelled him to the commission of so atrocious a crime, Poltrot declared it to have arisen solely from zeal for his religion. With regard to the persons who had instigated him, he accused several, but without uniformity; and among others he named the Admiral. Coligny, highly indignant at an imputation, which must necessarily stigmatize him with indelible infamy to his own adherents, and to the latest posterity; repelled the charge by every means of proof that were in his power. He even demanded of the queen, that the criminal's punishment should be delayed, till they could be personally confronted, and the falsity of the accusation could be satisfactorily demonstrated. These justifications and solemn protestations did not, however, convince the family of Guise, of Coligny's innocence. Henry, eldest son to the Duke, then in very early youth, vowed perpetual enmity, and imprecated vengeance on the Admiral's head, as his father's murderer. He satiated this unrelenting desire of revenge

revenge many years afterwards, at the mas- 1563.
sacre of St. Bartholomew*.

The

* Brantome, tho' devotedly attached to the house of Guise, yet does not absolutely accuse the Admiral, as the concealed author of the Duke's death. He only drops some ambiguous intimations, that Coligny knew of Poltrot's designs, without exposing himself to the infamy of a discovery, in case of the assassin being taken. He however pretends, that the Duke himself suspected Coligny, and pardoned him, when expiring.—Davila says, that the Admiral and Theodore Beza were universally believed to have persuaded Poltrot to commit this crime. They constantly denied the charge, and dispersed long justifications of their innocence over all Europe; but the Catholics, and the house of Guise, still believed them guilty, and anxiously waited for an occasion of revenge. Davila expressly declares, that Poltrot persisted invariably in the same assertions; confirming, when under the torture, his accusations of the Admiral and Beza, which he had first voluntarily made.—De Thou, who seems to leave the matter more in doubt, says, that Poltrot, tho' he had twice certified on oath, and signed the deposition, by which he accused Coligny of having urged him to the commission of the crime; yet, on being afterwards put to the torture, retracted this accusation, and exculpated Coligny: then again he repeated the same assertion. The Admiral, De Thou allows, wrote in the most pressing terms to the queen, beseeching her to delay

1563. The Duke of Guise, perceiving that his end approached, prepared himself for it, with perfect composure. That calm intrepidity, and unruffled serenity of temper, which had distinguished him thro' life, were equally characteristic of his dying moments. He recommended to the Duchess his wife, the education of their children; and he exhorted Henry, his eldest son, to preserve an inviolable fidelity to the king. Mindful of his honor, and desirous to clear his conduct from the aspersions which had been cast upon it, he vindicated himself from any intention to commit the massacre of Vassy; and lament-

delay Poltrot's execution, solemnly denying the crime imputed to him, or any participation in it, and demanding to be personally confronted with the assassin.

It is difficult to quit the subject of Francis, Duke of Guise, without mentioning a circumstance respecting him, which marks the highest magnanimity and patriotism. Previous to the storm of the breach at Rouen, when he harangued his soldiers, and put himself at their head, he ardently recommended to them three things; to respect the chastity and honor of the women; to spare the lives of every Catholic without distinction; but to shew no mercy or quarter to the English auxiliaries, their ancient and inveterate enemies.

ed in the most pathetic terms, that unhappy event, which had lighted up the destructive flame of civil discord. With earnest entreaties he besought the queen, as the common mother of her people, to terminate the quarrels which desolated France ; and pronounced the man an enemy to his country and his sovereign, who should venture to offer her any other counsel.

The funeral honors which were paid to him after death, were scarcely less than royal, and are equalled by nothing in the French annals, except those which Turenne received above a century afterwards, from the gratitude of Louis the fourteenth. The Duke's body was first carried to the convent of the Chartreux at Paris, and from thence to the metropolitan church of "Notre-Dame," where he lay in state ; immense crowds of citizens following the procession. His remains were finally deposited with those of his ancestors, at Joinville in Lorrain.

Poltrot, who was adjudged by the parliament to suffer the punishment inflicted on traitors and regicides, was torn in pieces by horses. At his execution, it is asserted that

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1563. he still continued to accuse the Admiral, of having been privy to the commission of the crime. The whole tenor of Coligny's life and conduct, seem nevertheless to refute this imputation; nor can we admit so insufficient a testimony, probably extorted by the violence of torture, as affording sufficient proof of the fact. It is at the same time difficult to calculate how far the spirit of religious zeal, inflamed and heightened by personal animosities, might have impelled Coligny to consider the Duke of Guise's death, by whatever means it was effected, as justifiable and necessary.

When we impartially contemplate the variety of qualities and endowments which met in Francis, Duke of Guise, we must admit him to have been one of the greatest characters of the age in which he flourished. His errors, and even his vices, were probably more the result of situation, than of sentiment; and his ambition, tho' not justified, is palliated by the talents for war and government which nature had conferred on him, as well as by the peculiar circumstances which gave them exertion. Tho' a foreigner, and

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on that account naturally obnoxious to the nobility of France, he performed services to the state, greater than those which any of his contemporaries could boast of having rendered. The preservation of Metz, and the recapture of Calais, would, of themselves, immortalize his memory. It is impossible to justify the abuse which he made of power under Francis the second, nor the severities exercised on the Calvinists taken in the conspiracy of Amboise. As little can we approve the violent measures carried on by him soon afterwards, against the two princes of the blood, Anthony and Louis. But, at the time when his death took place, he was almost the only remaining barrier between the throne, then occupied by a child, and the rage of religious innovation. Catherine of Medicis herself, liberated by his decease from all further opposition, and without a rival in the cabinet, could no longer be restrained within any limits, in her projects of vengeance or ambition.

The regent manifested, nevertheless, her deference to the Duke of Guise's dying advice, by the immediate overtures which she made for a pacification. It was not difficult to conclude,

1563. conclude, by the mediation of the Constable
March 18. and the prince of Condé, both of whom were
equally anxious to escape from confinement.
The terms might be considered as favorable to
the Hugonots; tho' the Admiral, on his arrival
from Normandy, reproached the prince in
very severe expressions, for his hasty compli-
ance with the queen's propositions, at a crisis
when the Duke of Guise's death, gave them
reason to expect the most flattering reverse
of fortune.

In consequence of the peace, as the leading
article of it, Orleans was evacuated by the
Calvinist troops; and in order the better to
secure its future obedience, la Cipierre, one
of the most virtuous, as well as accomplished
noblemen in the kingdom, was appointed go-
vernor of the city. He was already in pos-
session of a charge, the most important from
its nature and functions, which could be en-
trusted to any subject; that of preceptor to
the young king. No man was more calculated
to execute with ability, its arduous duties.
Anxious to instil the most elevated sentiments
into his royal pupil, he would probably have
inspired Charles, who possessed excellent
parts, and a quick perception; with the love
of

of virtue, and with sentiments of enlarged humanity becoming a great monarch, such as would have eminently conduced to the felicity of France. But, the untimely death of La Cipierre, which took place before these principles and maxims could sink deep into Charles's bosom, or could produce their proper effect on his mind and understanding, deprived his country of so great a benefit. We may trace the sanguinary scenes which characterized this unhappy reign, with too much probability, to the unfortunate loss which the king sustained of his first preceptor.

Albert de Gondi, Marechal de Retz, a Florentine by birth, and a devoted creature of Catherine, was selected by her to fill the post which La Cipierre had previously occupied. Destitute of principle, dissolute in his manners, cruel from natural temper, dissembling, and master of every art of sordid policy ; he corrupted or perverted the many eminent qualities, with which nature had liberally endowed the king. Imbued with the most pernicious maxims, and hardened by the most profligate examples, while yet in early childhood ; all the high expectations to which

1563.

1563. *Charles had justly given birth, and which he was so well qualified to fulfil, were defeated and rendered abortive.*

During the temporary tranquillity which succeeded to the late troubles of the state, Catherine, instead of endeavoring to extinguish by measures of firmness and wisdom, tempered with lenity, the still existing seeds of civil war; with her usual duplicity attempted to destroy the Hugonots, by sowing the principles of jealousy between the prince of Condé and Coligny. To the former she renewed the same fallacious proposals, which had been made repeatedly with so much success to Anthony, his brother, for the gratification of his personal ambition: but Louis, who was not to be deceived by her insidious offers, adhered invariably to his party: and repelled every effort of the queen to dissolve the intimate connexion, which continued to subsist between him and the Admiral.

Not discouraged by the failure of her plans of political seduction, she addressed herself to the personal weakness of the prince; who, as Catherine well knew, was more assailable on the side of love, than on that of policy.

Notwith-

Notwithstanding his want of the exterior graces of demeanor, no person in the court of France had received such flattering proofs of female attachment, or was more generally acceptable to the sex. Margaret de Lustrac, widow of the Marechal de St. André, long disputed the possession of his heart, with Isabella de la Tour de Turenne, known in history under the name of “La Belle de Limeüil.” Each of these contending rivals gave him the most unequivocal testimonies of their regard: the first having presented him with her estate and castle of St. Valeri, magnificently furnished; the latter, who carried her passion farther, sacrificing to him her chastity and honor. Having been finally brought to bed in the queen’s wardrobe; the scandal which such a scene occasioned, compelled that princess to assume the appearance of indignation. As Mademoiselle de Limeüil was allied to her by consanguinity, and in her quality of a maid of honor constituted one of her own family; Catherine, affecting severity, ordered her to be instantly conducted to a convent*. The

* Almost all the French writers have been very minute and circumstantial in the relation of this singular

1563. The Admiral, who was conscious that these
~~~ glaring irregularities of conduct in the chief  
of

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lar anecdote, and even Davila did not deem it unworthy a recital.—“It was Catherine’s favorite system of “policy,” says he, “at the conclusion of the first “civil war, to engage the prince of Condé in all those “effeminate pleasures, which might insensibly enervate his mind, and imperceptibly diminish the natural activity of his disposition. She peculiarly endeavored, by the donation of honors and ample possessions, to give him a distaste for the fatigues of a camp. In order to accomplish this end, she prompted and encouraged the Marechale de St. André, who inherited from her father and her husband, prodigious riches, to attempt the conquest of the prince’s heart; but, tho’ he accepted her splendid present, he despised her person, and remained proof against all her attacks.”—To Mademoiselle de Limeüil he was more deeply attached; and Davila makes no scruple to declare that Catherine was not ignorant, tho’ she affected to be so, that he had obtained from her the last favors.

De Thou coincides with the historian already mentioned, in all the principal circumstances of this story. “The queen-mother,” says he, “having first vainly attempted to seduce the prince of Condé, by the same fallacious prospects of ambition, which had succeeded with his brother the king of Navarre; and peculiarly by the pretended promise of the island of Sardinia, attacked him thro’ another channel,

of his party, reflected a disgrace on all its adherents; and who likewise dreaded lest some one of the prince's amours, might prove too strong for the weaker ties of ambition or religion; remonstrated with him forcibly

“ channel, with more success. Having remarked that “ the prince betrayed a partiality towards Mademoiselle de Limeüil, one of her maids of honor, Catherine herself induced and engaged her to omit no means of augmenting his passion. The princess of Condé, his wife, was so deeply affected by his infidelity, that it produced her death. Mademoiselle de Limeüil then flattering herself that the prince would marry her, granted him the last favor; but becoming with child, the queen expelled her from court, and she was abandoned by her lover.—The Marechale de St. André conceived the same chimerical project, and was equally deceived in her expectations.”—It is said that the prince's wife, Eleanor de Roye, died a martyr to her jealousy and chagrin at her husband's amours. Mademoiselle de Limeüil was married afterwards to Geoffry de Causac, Seigneur de Frenon.

The prince of Condé's acknowledged gallantries and libertinism gave occasion at the time, to the following *Vaudeville*, or satirical sonnet :

“ Ce petit homme tant joly,  
 “ Toujours cause, et toujours rit,  
 “ Et toujours baise sa mignonne :  
 “ Dieu garde de mal le petit homme!”

1563. on the pernicious consequences, public as well as personal, of his continual deviations from decorum. So sensible was Condé of the truth, no less than the expediency of this expostulation, that he soon afterwards entered into a second marriage with Frances, sister to the Duke of Longueville.

No sooner had the articles of the late pacification restored general obedience and unanimity, than the Catholics and Hugonots, forgetting their inveterate animosities, and equally animated by the love of their common country, joined to recover Havre-de-Grace from the English, to whom it had been ceded during the civil war. Their efforts were successful: the place, which was badly defended by the July 28. troops of Elizabeth, soon capitulated; and its surrender was followed by a final accommodation, which took place a few months afterwards, between the two crowns of France and England.

Catherine, who had always amused the prince of Condé with promises of admitting him to an active participation in the government, and who knew not how longer to exclude him from a share of the administration; in

in order to elude the completion of her engagement, had recourse to a singular expedient. The Chancellor, l'Hopital, who had voluntarily withdrawn from court during the tyranny of “the Triumvirate;” but, who had been recalled by the regent, and reinstated in his office, was regarded as the secret author of the measure. The young king entered at this time into the fourteenth year of his age. By virtue of the memorable edict of Charles the fifth of France, promulgated in 1363, it was indispensible that he should have completed the year which he had commenced, before he attained the legal term of his majority. But, as the queen, in consequence of the declaration of his being no longer a minor, well knew that she might retain unmolested the supreme power, in her son's name; she dexterously procured an act to be registered in the parliament of Rouen, which declared the king's minority to be then actually expired\*. The parliament of Paris refusing to

\* No measure of the administration of Catherine of Medicis was more able, or more artful, than that of anticipating her son's majority, by which, under the appearance of resigning, she in effect continued and

1563. to admit such an infraction of the fundamental laws, or usages of the French monarchy, seemed disposed to contest the right of infringing them by this anticipation of the royal authority. But Charles, violent in his temper, and instructed by his mother, reprimanded the members of that august body, in terms so severe, for their temerity in thus attempting to limit his prerogative, that after a considerable delay, it passed the assembly.

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augmented her authority. Charles addressed the parliament of Rouen from his throne, on that occasion, surrounded by all the princes of the blood, and environed with the Insignia of royalty. His speech was full of fire, and in a tone of command, which was highly consentaneous to his character. When he had finished his harangue, the queen-mother rose, and declared that she then with infinite joy restored to her son the administration of his kingdom. As she prepared to take the oath of allegiance and fidelity, Charles descended from his throne, uncovered himself, and advanced to meet her: Catherine embraced him on her knees, and the king declared that he should defer more than ever to her advice and counsels. Being again seated on his throne, the princes of the blood, and principal lords of the court, were permitted to kiss his hand, and to do him homage. The edict which declared the king's majority, was then read publicly by the proper officer, and instantly afterwards solemnly registered.

Magnifi-

Magnificent in all her inclinations, the queen, after having caused the palace of the Tournelles, at Paris, in which her husband Henry the second had expired, to be entirely demolished ; began to erect in its place, the more splendid fabric of the Tuilleries, which still continues to be considered as the principal residence of the French sovereigns. She employed in its construction, the most celebrated architects of the age, whom she rewarded with the noblest liberality. All the branches of polite literature equally felt her patronage ; and Italy, her native country, was ransacked for monuments of art, in order to enrich and adorn the kingdom over which she reigned. She always affected to manifest the utmost reverence for the memory of Francis the first, in whose court she had passed her early years, and whose character, as the protector of letters and science, she professed to imitate and emulate. Splendid in her taste, refined and delicate in her projects, beyond the genius of the century in which she flourished ; Catherine of Medicis, if the qualities of her heart had equalled those of her understanding, would have formed one of the greatest characters

1564.

1564. racters which is to be found in the history of the world.

Notwithstanding the apparent calm which had succeeded to the late troubles, no reliance was reposed by the Hugonots on the sincerity of the government: while the continual complaints which were made by each party, relative to alternate infringements of the articles of the peace, strongly proved the uncertainty of its duration. The family of Guise continued loudly to demand justice against Coligny, as the supposed author of the late Duke's assassination. A contest which took place between Francis de Montmorenci, the Constable's eldest son, who was governor of Paris, and the Cardinal of Lorrain, in which the adherents of both parties flew to arms; had nearly lighted up again the flames of civil commotion throughout the kingdom. Every circumstance indicated how frail were the foundations on which reposed the public tranquillity.

The queen therefore, from a variety of motives, resolved to carry her son on a progress thro' various parts of his dominions. It was generally supposed that a principal induce-

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ment to undertake this journey, tho' studiously concealed by the court, was in order to form an estimate of the Hugonot forces and real strength, by an accurate inspection of them in person. The desire of shewing the young sovereign to his subjects, and of awakening their loyalty and fidelity by his presence, and by their knowledge of his character, formed, nevertheless, the ostensible pretext. Catherine, who always concealed her deepest political designs under the mask of pleasure, endeavored by every demonstration of gaiety and amusement, natural on such an occasion, to lull asleep the apprehensions of the Hugonots, respecting the real object of the king's progress: but their vigilance was not to be thus deceived or circumvented. The characteristic magnificence of the queen's disposition was displayed in the preparations made for Charles's journey. A numerous train of courtiers and ladies attended his person; and Henry, Duke of Anjou, the eldest of the king's two brothers, as well as Margaret, his youngest sister, who afterwards became queen of Navarre, accompanied their mother. After having visited Sens, and Troyes in Cham- April.

page;

1564. ~~~~~~~ pagne; at which latter city Charles concluded a treaty with Elizabeth, queen of England, from whom he at the same time received the order of the Garter; he continued his progress to the city of Bar. The Duke of Lorrain, and his wife, the Duchess Claude, the king's eldest sister, meeting him at that place, entertained him with the utmost splendor.

Passing thro' Burgundy to Lyons, he was compelled to quit that city on account of the plague, and to remove to the little town of Rousillon in Dauphiné, where he was visited by Emmanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy. At Marseilles he made a public entry, and returning by Avignon, he passed the Rhone 1565. into Languedoc. The court, after visiting the principal places of that province and of Guyenne, where they made some stay in the cities of Toulouse and of Bourdeaux, arrived at Bayonne in the summer of the following June. year. Here took place the celebrated interview between Charles and the queen of Spain, Elizabeth, his sister; who was conducted to the Spanish borders by a splendid train, at the head of which Philip the second had placed the Duke of Alva, and the Count de Benevento.

vento. The Duke of Anjou, with a number of the young French nobility, passing the frontiers, advanced to meet his sister at Arnani in the Spanish Navarre. Catherine of Medicis, from impatience to embrace her daughter, crossed the river Bidassoa, which separates the two kingdoms; and when she reached the opposite side, Elizabeth was met <sup>1565.</sup> ~~June 10.~~ by the king himself, who gave her his hand to conduct her out of the vessel.

The young queen was received with prodigious pomp at Bayonne, where the interview between the two sovereigns continued for above three weeks. Every beautiful and brilliant entertainment, every elegant diversion, which Catherine's fertile genius could invent or procure, was exhibited, to testify her joy on this occasion, and to impress the Spaniards with the highest ideas of the refinement of the court of France. Pleasure, which seemed to engross all present, appeared to have banished from this scene of festivity, any schemes of vengeance, or plans of destruction: but it was the queen's peculiar characteristic, to veil her most sanguinary designs under the cloak of dissipation. A gallery, constructed purposely to join the house

1565. house in which she resided, with that of her daughter the queen of Spain, served to facilitate the secret conferences, which it is asserted that she held with the Duke of Alva, on the subject of reducing and extirpating the Hugonots\*. Some uncertain and ambiguous

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\* De Thou gives credit to the suspicion of measures having been concerted at Bayonne, for the extermination of the Protestants; tho' he seems to rest the proof of such an intention, chiefly on the assertion of the Calvinist writers themselves. Jean Baptiste Adriani, who was the continuator of Guicciardini's history, confirms the accusation; and adds, that the conferences between Catherine and the Duke of Alva, were held at the desire of the Pope; that it was determined to renew the Massacre of the Sicilian Vespers, and not to spare even the persons of the highest quality or distinction. It is pretended that the city of Moulins, where an assembly of the principal nobility was convoked to meet in January, 1566, was destined to be the scene of this tragedy.

Davila expressly avows Catherine's intention of cutting off the heads of Heresy, and destroying the Hugonots. He only says, that the Duke of Alva was of opinion to employ the most violent and sanguinary measures: while the queen-mother, consulting the genius of the French nation, reluctant to imbrue her hands in the blood of the first nobility, and princes of the royal family; dreading besides, a renewal of the civil commotions,

biguous intimations of this powerful confederacy formed for their destruction, having been circulated abroad, awakened suspicions which were strongly confirmed by Catherine's character, and by her subsequent conduct. Distrust necessarily succeeded, nor could any caresses of the king or of the court, afterwards dispel their apprehensions.

At the termination of the interview of Bayonne, the queen-mother conducted her son to Nerae, a little city of Gascony, in which Jane, queen of Navarre, had fixed

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tions, and fearful of the dismemberment of the kingdom, by the introduction of English and German auxiliaries ; leaned to more gentle and temporizing counsels.—No historic fact of a secret nature, can be better established, than the consultations held for the destruction of the Hugonots, during the interview of Bayonne ; tho' it is difficult to say how precisely the minute features of that plan were there traced by Philip and Catherine. Francis de la Noue, a protestant writer, asserts, that the prince of Condé and Coligny received accurate information of the intention to massacre themselves, and their adherents, at the assembly of Meulins. It is certain that they conceived a general and well-founded suspicion of the hostile and treacherous designs of the court, from the time of the interview at Bayonne ; and that it laid the foundation of the renewal of the civil war, in little more than two years afterwards.

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1565. her residence, and established her court, on account of its distance from the Spanish frontiers. She had been reduced to the necessity of abandoning Pau, her ancient capital, situate in Bearn, where even her person was not safe from the perfidy and enterprizes of Philip the second. That prince, by an act which it is impossible to stigmatize with sufficient abhorrence, and which has no parallel in modern History; had attempted, in violation of all the laws of Nations, as well as of the private ties which connect society, to seize on, and deliver over the queen of Navarre to the Inquisition, on the pretence of Heresy.

Nov. After a short stay in Nerac, the court continuing its progress North thro' Angoulesme and Tours, arrived at Blois, where Charles passed a part of the winter; and early in the 1566. ensuing year he repaired to Moulins. An assembly of the nobility was held in that city, Jan. where a constrained reconciliation, destitute of mutual sincerity or forgiveness, took place between the Admiral Coligny and the family of Guise. This scene of reciprocal dissimulation, performed in the royal presence, was followed by

by another reconciliation, not more real, between the Cardinal of Lorrain and the Marechal de Montmorenci.

1566.

So far was the conduct of the court from inspiring confidence, or diffusing tranquillity, that new causes of distrust and dissatisfaction disclosed themselves every day. The edicts of toleration and protection, repeatedly issued in favor of the Reformed religion, were violated in all the provinces with impunity: while the government, which indirectly encouraged these proceedings, afforded no redress to the grievances of the Calvinists. Thus treated, they carried the complaints of their oppressions, to the Admiral and to the prince of Condé; but it was long before either of those chiefs, however indignant, could be induced to resume the sword. The latter, who still nourished hopes of being appointed Lieutenant-general of the kingdom, as his brother the king of Navarre had been, manifested the utmost reluctance to take up arms. Both of them peculiarly dreaded the impressing their young sovereign, who was now advancing fast to manhood, with sentiments unfavorable to themselves and to their party. Actuated

1567.

1567. by these wishes, they twice dismissed the delegates sent by their adherents, after having advised and enjoined them rather to submit to any persecution, than to have recourse to so odious a remedy as rebellion, and a renewal of the calamities to which they had already been witnesses. But, the information which they soon afterwards received, that it was determined in the cabinet to seize on them both ; to detain the prince in perpetual imprisonment, and to put Coligny to death ; obliged them to think of taking more decisive

May. and vigorous measures. In a great assembly of the Hugonot nobility and leaders, which was held at the castle of St. Valeri, belonging to the prince of Condé ; it was agreed to suspend all acts of hostility or violence, till they had received more certain intelligence of the intentions of the court. But, in a subsequent council summoned at Chatillon, the paternal seat of Coligny ; d'Andelot, his brother, who was always of opinion to embrace the most decided measures, strongly urged an immediate and open renewal of the war. His remonstrances having finally prevailed, it was resolved to begin by an attempt to gain posses-

possession of the young king, which could only be effected by cutting in pieces the Swiss guards, who attended on and protected his person\*.

This

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\* Brantome, who was certainly well informed in political court intrigues, declares the second civil war to have been principally caused by the prince of Condé's disappointed ambition. He had flattered himself with the Lieutenancy of the kingdom; but Catherine, unable longer to delude him with promises, tutored her favorite son Henry, Duke of Anjou, and inspired him with the desire of filling that high office. At a supper given in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prez, at Paris, the young prince most severely and haughtily reprimanded Condé, for his audacity in presuming to aspire to a post, which he had resolved to possess himself. Brantome says that he was present, and heard the conversation. Condé perceiving from what hand the blow came, saw all his expectations blasted; and conscious that he was duped by the queen, he sought for revenge by unsheathing the sword. The writer of Louis, Duke of Montpensier's life, asserts the same fact, and Davila confirms its authenticity.

This last historian, with his usual impartiality and discernment, has laid open, with great exactness, the many latent principles which produced the second civil war. He accuses the partizans of both religions, with being principally accessory to it, by their reciprocal injuries and animosities. He attributes it to

1567. This enterprize, tho' bold, did not appear  
Sept. to be difficult; as Charles, with the queen  
his mother, resided in perfect security at the  
country palace of Monceaux, where he was  
actually occupied in holding a grand Chapter  
of the order of St. Michael. The Switzers,  
dispersed in the surrounding villages, might  
have all been separately surprized, and easily  
put to the sword; but Catherine having re-  
ceived intelligence of the prince of Condé's

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the young king's high and unconcealed resentment of  
the presumption, and encroaching spirit of the Hugo-  
nots; to the prince of Condé's ambitious and restless  
temper; to the fears of the Calvinists, on account of  
the supposed schemes for their destruction planned at  
Bayonne; to the march of the Duke of Alva, at the  
head of a numerous army, along the eastern frontiers,  
for the purpose of subjecting the revolted subjects of  
Philip the second in the Low Countries; to the contin-  
ual infractions of the peace by the Catholics, and the  
wanton outrages committed by them on the Hugonots;  
to Coligny's and d'Andelot's haughty and unsubmitting  
spirit; to Catherine's hypocrisy and dangerous dissimu-  
lation; and lastly, to the Cardinal of Lorrain's violent  
counsels.—All these conjoined causes, operating on  
minds already inflamed with mutual animosity, and  
incapable of being restrained, again involved the king-  
dom in new commotions.

and

and Coligny's approach, suspecting their intentions, retired hastily with her son into the neighbouring city of Meaux. She then dispatched the Marechal de Montmorenci to the Hugonot chiefs, charged on her part with some unmeaning or illusory proposals, only calculated to gain time, while the Switzers assembled for the king's defence.

As every instant was precious, a council was held, on the measures requisite to be pursued by the government, in this critical juncture. The Constable, become cautious from age, and attentive to his young sovereign's safety, wished, if it were possible, not to expose him to the hazard of an uncertain combat, in attempting to retreat to the capital. The Chancellor, touched by the salutary considerations of the public tranquillity, which were ever uppermost in his mind; and conscious that Charles would be irritated to the highest degree by so audacious an attempt, which must infallibly produce a second civil war, more cruel and inveterate than the first; joined Montmorenci in advising the king to remain at Meaux. Unfortunately, the Cardinal of Lorrain opposed these moderate

1567. counsels, and prevailed: it was resolved to endeavor to reach Paris. At the break of day, therefore, Charles mounting on horseback, quitted the city of Meaux, surrounded by the Switzers, in the centre of whom he was placed: but, before they had advanced two leagues, the prince of Condé appeared in sight, at the head of near five hundred horse. The Constable, dreading the shock of so determined a body commanded by such leaders, and rendered distrustful from experience; after having sustained repeated charges of the Hugonot cavalry, sent the king forward, accompanied by only two hundred horse; who taking a private road, conducted him Sept. 30. safely to Paris on the same evening. Condé, who was ignorant of this judicious precaution, renewed his efforts to throw the Switzers into disorder, but in vain: they sustained all his attacks, unmoved, and after having harassed them a considerable way, he at length retired without effecting any object\*.

Ineffec-

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\* Davila's account of the enterprize of Meaux, which is very circumstantial, differs somewhat from that

Ineffectual conferences succeeded to this 1567.  
unsuccessful enterprize: but, both parties, <sup>October.</sup> inflamed

that of Mezerai, and most of the other French historians.—He attributes the advice of marching to Paris, not to the Cardinal of Lorrain, but to the Duke of Nemours. He adds, that the Constable's opinion would notwithstanding have prevailed, if Fifer, general of the Switzers, requesting to be admitted to the young king's presence, had not assured his majesty, that his troops would open him a passage thro' the enemy, with the point of their pikes, if he would entrust his person to their protection. This offer was accepted, and the march began at day-break. Charles, the queen-mother, the foreign ambassadors, and all the ladies of the court, were received into the centre of the Swiss battalion. The Count de la Rochefoucault, and d'Andelot, having joined the prince of Condé and the Admiral, they made a furious attack on the rear; but were received on the Swiss pikes with great intrepidity. The king gallantly spurring on his horse to the foremost ranks, was followed by all the noblemen who attended him; and when he arrived safe in the capital, the Parisians shed tears of joy for his preservation. The whole merit of this action and escape, was due to the bravery of the Switzers.

De Thou is by no means so minute as Davila, in his narration of the particulars attending the enterprize of Meaux. He says, “ that the queen-mother assembled “ the council in the Duke of Nemours' chamber, who

1567. inflamed with animosity, were incapable of listening to any terms of peace. The Hugonots, tho' few in number, having attempted to block up and distress the capital ; Montmorenci, however reluctant, yet being compelled by the murmurs of the Parisians, marched out to give them battle. The prodigious inequality of numbers ensured him the victory ; but the glory of the day remained to Condé and Coligny, who with a handful of troops, could venture to engage a royal army so much superior, almost under the walls of the metropolis\*.

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“ was confined to his bed by the gout ; and that, contrary to the advice of the Constable and the Chancellor, it was there determined to endeavor to reach Paris. In consequence of this resolution, Charles, accompanied by about nine hundred gentlemen, quitting Meaux at midnight, proceeded towards the capital, escorted by the Switzers.”—Mezerai and De Thou, equally accuse the Cardinal of Lorrain, as the promoter of the war, by his violent and injudicious counsels.

\* The action, says Davila, began about noon, and the superiority of the Hugonots in cavalry, chiefly contributed to their success in the commencement of the battle. Tho' the royal army was so much super-

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The engagement, which was fought in the plains of St. Denis, was rendered memorable by

1567.  
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10.

rior to that of the enemy in numbers and in artillery, yet only the horse were engaged on both sides; the infantry of the Constable not being able to keep pace with the squadrons of cavalry, and being almost totally thrown out of the engagement. The prince of Condé was opposed to the Constable's division, which he entirely routed; but his horse was killed under him, and he with great difficulty recovered another. Coligny, who commanded the van on that day, being mounted on a fiery Turkish horse, was once so much engaged among the enemy, that he was borne away in their flight, and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. D'Andelot, who had been stationed on the other side the Seine, at Passy, could not join his friends in time to be present at the battle, on account of the bridges across the river having been all demolished. The Hugonots took the advantage of a very dark and rainy evening, to cover their retreat; and the Catholics, tho' victorious, yet did not pursue them, on account of the loss of their general.

In all the principal circumstances attending the battle of St. Denis, De Thou and Mezerai concur with Davila.—The Constable only intended originally to drive the prince of Condé from his posts round Paris, by which he distressed and straitened the capital: but, indignant at the complaints and outcries of the Parisians, who even dared to insinuate suspicious

jurious

1567. by the Constable's death, who exerted during the action all the courage and activity of a

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jurious to his fidelity and loyalty ; Montmorenci at length marched out, assuring the discontented citizens, that " he would on that day evince his steady adherence to the crown, and return either dead, or victorious."—The royal army consisted of sixteen thousand infantry, and three thousand cavalry, besides fourteen pieces of cannon ; whereas that of the Calvinists only amounted to twelve hundred foot, and fifteen hundred horse. Yet, encouraged by the season of the year, when the days were so short as not to allow the Catholics, even if victorious, to pursue their triumph, the prince of Condé determined to give battle to the Constable. The Switzers did not maintain their reputation for courage in this engagement, but gave way, when charged by the prince and the Admiral. A report having been spread that Coligny was taken prisoner, Catherine of Medicis caused very strict search to be made after him in Paris, among those whom she suspected to be capable of concealing his person.—D'Andelot, having repaired the pontoons upon the Seine, passed that river at St. Ouen the same evening, and joined his friends. All the honor of the action must be confessed to have remained with the Calvinists, who, notwithstanding the prodigious disparity of numbers, had maintained so unequal a contest. About seven hundred persons fell on both sides, principally from among the cavalry.—It is De Thou who enumerates these particulars.

young

young soldier. Wounded in five places, he <sup>1567.</sup> still continued to defend himself with undaunted intrepidity, till Robert Stuart, already distinguished in the troubles of the late reign, discharged a ball into his reins, which proved mortal. Even then, he had vigor enough left to drive the pommel of his sword into Stuart's mouth, with which he beat out several of his teeth. His son, Henry d'Amville, rescued, and disengaged him from the enemy. Fainting with loss of blood, he sunk down upon the ground ; but, the first use that he made of his speech when recovered, was to demand if there yet remained sufficient day to pursue the Hugonots. It was long before he would even permit himself to be carried off the field, on which he seemed obstinately resolved to expire

“ Tell the king and queen,” said he, “ that  
“ I die with the highest pleasure, in the dis-  
“ charge of the great duties which I owe  
“ them ; and that I have at length found  
“ that honorable end, which I have sought  
“ under their predecessors in so many bat-  
“ tles !”—Yielding at last to the importunate  
solicitations of his sons, and his surrounding  
friends,

1567. friends, he suffered himself to be carried to Paris, where Charles and his mother visited him, and lamented his approaching end. A Franciscan Friar wearying him with religious exhortations in his last moments, Montmorenci besought him to cease those needless remonstrances: “Dost thou imagine,” said the Constable, turning himself towards the monk with a serene countenance, “that I have lived to near fourscore years, without having yet learned to die a single quarter of an hour\*?”

In

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\* “The Constable,” says Davila, “tho’ overpowered by the fury of Condé’s and Coligny’s attack, yet continued to fight desperately. He had already received four slight wounds in the face, and one very large gash on the head, with a battle axe. While he was attempting to rally his disordered troops, Robert Stuart rode up to him, with a pistol levelled at his head. ‘Dost thou not know me?’ said Montmorenci, ‘I am the Constable of France.’ ‘Yes,’ answered Stuart, ‘I know thee well, and therefore I present thee this.’—So saying, he discharged a pistol ball into the Constable’s shoulder, who fell; but while falling, he dashed the hilt of his sword, which he had held fast in his hand, tho’ the blade was broke, into his enemy’s mouth. So violent

In him expired the last remaining obstacle to Catherine's authority, who saw herself delivered

1567.  
Nov.  
11.

“ violent was the blow, that it beat out three of  
“ Stuart's teeth, fractured his jaw-bone, and laid him  
“ instantly senseless on the ground. All his followers  
“ abandoned Montmorenci; and the Hugonots were  
“ carrying off his body, when the Duke of Aumale  
“ and d'Amville, having routed the van, which was  
“ commanded by Coligny, arrived on the spot, and  
“ rescued the Constable. They then conveyed him,  
“ senseless and dying, to Paris, where he expired on  
“ the ensuing day, with undaunted composure and  
“ magnanimity.”

Davila speaks with perfect impartiality of his character.—“ Montmorenci was,” says he, “ a man of great capacity, mature wisdom, and long experience. Those who judged of him dispassionately, allowed that he was a valiant soldier, and a dutiful servant; but, a bad friend, and ever entirely governed by his own interest.” The Constable was in his seventy-fifth year, when he was killed: his funeral rites were conducted with unusual pomp and solemnity. De Thou coincides with Davila, in every important circumstance relative to the death of Montmorenci.

Robert Stuart was afterwards taken prisoner at the battle of Jarnac, and being brought before Henry, Duke of Anjou, the Marquis de Villars besought the prince's permission to put him to death, as an offering to

1567. livered by his death from every rival that could henceforth oppose or impede her designs. Possessing an almost unlimited ascendancy over her son Charles's mind, she continued to govern France in effect, not less than if she had been still invested with the title of regent. Tho' the Constable had been always unsuccessful in the field, and was with reason accounted the most unfortunate commander of his age ; tho' his bigotry, severity, and imperious manners, rendered him little an object of love, or even of just veneration ; yet we cannot help lamenting the veteran who had fought under Gaston de Foix, at Ra-

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to the Manes of Montmorenci. Henry long refused to consent to so base a murder : but, at length, overcome with the importunity of the Marquis, he turned his head aside, and said, “ Well then—be it so ! ” Stuart, with animated entreaty, represented to him how ignominious and dastardly an action he was about to authorize, and endeavored to awaken his compassion and sense of honor : but all was ineffectual. He was led a little on one side, disarmed, and put to death, in the very hearing of the Duke. Even Brantome, corrupt as he was, speaks with honest indignation and abhorrence of this infamous act, exactly similar to that committed by Montesquiou on the prince of Condé, after the same battle of Jarnac.

venna ; who, during near sixty years occupies so distinguished a place in the French annals ; and who had been successively the friend no less than the favorite of two monarchs, Francis and Henry. He alone could have ventured to inspire the young king with the desire of reigning, independently of his mother's counsels ; and his death left her an unlimited career for the exertion of her pernicious influence over Charles's mind.

The post of Constable was not filled up after the death of Montmorenci, nor would the king confer so high a dignity even on his own brother Henry, tho' strongly urged to that purpose by Catherine of Medicis. Several noblemen of the court warmly soliciting it for themselves, Charles, jealous of his authority, and deeming this charge too great in itself, as well as too near the throne, refused to confer it on any subject. "I want no person," said he, "to carry my sword : "I am well able to carry it myself." Yielding however with reluctance to the entreaties and expostulations of the queen-mother, in favor of her beloved son, Henry, Duke of Anjou ; the king constituted him Lieutenant-general

1567. general of the kingdom, tho' he was then scarcely sixteen years of age. Charles's character, as he approached towards manhood, began gradually to disclose itself. He possessed almost all the qualities requisite to constitute a great prince, if they had not been corrupted and depraved by the most flagitious examples and instructions. Dissimulation, cruelty, and intolerance, were either familiarized to him by constant habit, or were even inculcated into him as virtues. Catherine, only anxious to reign, endeavored to prevent her son from feeling his own intellectual powers ; and of consequence emancipating himself from the state of tutelage, in which he had hitherto been retained by her. In the mean time, the Hugonot army, overpowered by superior numbers, but not vanquished at St. Denis ; being reinforced by d'Andelot, who had joined the prince of Condé, advanced towards Paris, and even Jan. 11. ventured, on the day after the battle, to attack the suburbs of that capital. They were at length repulsed, tho' not without considerable slaughter on both sides. Then retiring, in defiance of the royal forces, they effected

effected their junction with Casimir, son to the elector Palatine, who led to their assistance a body of German auxiliaries. The important city of Rochelle declared in their favor, by which they acquired a port upon the Atlantic ; and La Noue, one of their generals, made himself master of Orleans : but the prince of Condé was repulsed before the city of Sens, by Henry, the young Duke of Guise, who already emulated his father's fame. The combined troops of the Hugonot leaders, French and German, formed nevertheless a numerous army ; and in hopes of being again able to invest, or to distress the capital, the prince laid siege to the city of Chartres. The success of the enterprize was considered as doubtful ; but while he remained before the place, new propositions of peace were tendered to him by Catherine. They terminated in the treaty of Chartres, concluded on terms nearly similar to those of the preceding pacification. But, the Hugonots, who were dissatisfied with it, as being, in their estimation, equally fraudulent and dangerous, gave it the denomination of “ La “ Paix boiteuse et mal-assize,” from the

names

1568. names of the two principal negotiators of it on the part of the king ; one of whom, the Marechal de Biron, was lame, and the other, Henry de Mesme, was lord of the estate of “ Mal-“ assize.” It produced however, a temporary suspension of hostilities, tho’ it could neither diffuse tranquillity, nor diminish that mutual distrust and aversion, which the opposite parties nourished against each other. We now proceed to the still more sanguinary scenes of this turbulent reign.

## CHAP. XI.

*Attempt to seize the prince of Condé.—Third civil war.—Battle of Jarnac.—Death of Condé.—Characters of the Admiral Coligny, and of Jane, queen of Navarre.—Siege of Poitiers.—Battle of Moncontour.—Arrival of the king in the camp before St. John d'Angeli.—March of Coligny.—Conclusion of peace.—Treachery of the court.—Marriage of the king to the Archduchess Elizabeth.—Her character.—Festivities at court.—Policy of Catherine of Medicis.—Reflections.—Dissimulation of Charles and the queen-mother.—Arrival of Coligny at the court.—Commencement of disunion between the king and Henry, Duke of Anjou.—Contrast of their characters.—Affiance of Henry, prince of Navarre, to Margaret of Valois.—Death of Jane, queen of Navarre.—Circumstances attending it.—Determination of Coligny to remain at Paris.—Margaret of Valois.—Her nuptials, and character.—Attempt to assassinate Coligny.—Dissimulation of Charles.—Resolution taken to exterminate the Hugonots.—Terrors and irresolution of the king, previous to the massacre.—Death of Coligny.—Deaths of the Hu-*

gionot chiefs.—Detail of the principal circumstances attending the massacre of Paris.—Conduct of Charles.—Fourth civil war.—Siege of *La Rochelle*.—Character of the Duke of *Alençon*.—Remorse of the king.—Election of the Duke of *Anjou* to the crown of Poland.—Carousals at court.—Charles's impatience for his brother's departure.—Mary of *Cleves*.—Her character, and amour with the Duke of *Anjou*.—Quarrels between the king and his mother.—Henry, Duke of *Anjou*, begins his journey.—Illness of Charles.—Suspicious excited by that event.—Arrival of the king of Poland at *Cracow*.—He abandons himself to dejection.—New commotions in France.—Change in the king's conduct.—Conspiracy of the Duke of *Alençon*, discovered.—Progress of Charles's indisposition.—Intrigues of the queen-mother to secure the regency.—Execution of *La Mole* and *Coconas*.—Circumstances of the king's last illness.—Death of Charles the ninth.—Inquiry into the causes of it.—His character, issue, and funeral.—Conclusion.

1568. SUCH was the implacable zeal which  
 ~~~ animated the partizans of either religion, in  
 these unhappy times ; and such was the perfidious system of policy pursued by Catherine of Medicis, with a view to circumvent or
 to

to ensnare the Hugonots ; that no permanent accommodation, founded on mutual confidence, could take place throughout the kingdom. Scarcely any of the conditions stipulated by the late treaty of Chartres, were observed ; while mutual rage armed the hands of Catholics and Protestants against each other. Alternate insults and acts of violence were committed in many of the provinces, which strongly evinced how little either party could be restrained by nominal edicts of protection or of toleration. The professors of the reformed religion were attacked, or massacred with impunity ; and the treacherous intentions of the court itself, however artfully concealed, soon appeared too visibly to be mistaken.

The prince of Condé, tho' he had so recently signed a pacification, yet not daring to trust himself in the power of his enemies ; had withdrawn to the castle of Noyers in Burgundy, which belonged to him in right of his second wife, Frances de Longueville ; whither Coligny likewise repaired. While they remained in this retirement, unapprehensive of danger, a soldier was one day surprised in the act of measuring the ditch and July. walls,

1568. walls, as if with intent to ascertain whether the place might be successfully attacked. On being questioned, this man confessed that he was sent by the court, whose intention it was to seize on the prince and all his family. The queen, who had hoped to take the great leaders of the Calvinists, while unprepared, and who had only concluded the peace of Chartres, in order to disarm their suspicions; no sooner found that her designs were discovered, than she ordered the royal troops to enter Burgundy. Condé and the Admiral, who perceived the project concerted for their destruction, were sensible of the extreme peril in which they stood, and knew that no safety was to be found except in immediate flight. It was not easy to evade the many detached bodies of soldiers, already posted to intercept their passage; but necessity dictated the attempt, as the sole means of preservation. Quitting Aug. 23. Noyers therefore, only escorted by one hundred and fifty cavalry, in the centre of which were placed their wives and children, they undertook to cross all France, from Burgundy to the Atlantic. Fortune favoured their enterprize; an unusual drought enabled them

to

to ford the river Loire ; and after having traversed a number of hostile provinces, thro' continual and imminent dangers, they arrived ^{Sept. 19.} 1568. safely at the city of Rochelle*.

* Mezerai, Davila, and De Thon, all relate the circumstances of Condé's and Coligny's flight from Noyers, in nearly similar terms. It was a spectacle worthy of compassion, say these historians, to see a prince of the blood comp't d to abandon his residence, where he was living peaceably under the faith of a royal treaty ; reduced to fly from the destruction which impended, encumbered with a numerous family ; and scarcely accompanied by any escort which could protect him against his enemies. Three of his children were still in the cradle : the princess of Condé herself, and the two families of Coligny and of d'Andelot, as yet in very early youth, or in their nurses' arms, following the march, augmented the difficulties of their flight. Scarcely had they passed the Loire at Sancerre, when the Count de Tavannes, at the head of a body of Catholic forces sent to intercept them, appeared on the opposite bank : but a sudden inundation preventing him from crossing the river, as if by miracle saved the prince. Continuing his route thro' the provinces of Limousin and Poictou, he arrived at length at Rochelle ; where Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, joined him soon afterwards with her two children, Henry and Catherine. That princess was followed thither by all the principal Hugonot nobility and commanders, from every part of the kingdom.

1568. Far from wishing to disown, or to repair, the late act of perfidy, in thus attempting to seize the Hugonot chiefs, the conduct of the court displayed undisguised hostility and revenge ; nor were any healing measures embraced, which might have averted the renewal of hostilities ; such was the spirit which seemed to actuate the government. The Chancellor l'Hopital, too virtuous for the purposes of a treacherous administration, and suspected of a partiality towards the Hugonots ; was deprived of the seals, disgraced, and confined to his country seat, near Estampes. His office was soon afterwards conferred on John de Morvilliers, Bishop of Orleans. Henry, Duke of Anjou, then only sixteen years of age, was placed by his mother at the head of the royal army, tho' the Marechal de Tavannes superintended and principally directed its operations. The young prince Novem. having joined his forces, a general engagement was expected to have taken place ; but the advanced season of the year preventing it, obliged both commanders to retire into winter quarters.

1569. In consequence of the necessity which had compelled

compelled Condé and Coligny to take refuge within the walls of Rochelle, that city became about this time the principal seat of the Calvinist power. And as their adherents were more numerous in the adjoining provinces, than in any other part of the kingdom ; the scene of hostilities, which during the two first civil wars had been carried on principally in the vicinity of Paris, was now in a great measure transferred to the countries beyond the Loire. The two armies again took the field in the ensuing spring ; and the Duke of Anjou, who was far superior in numbers, after many unsuccessful attempts, at length compelled the Hugonots to risk a decisive action. It was fought on the banks of the river Charente, in Mar. 13. the province of Angoumois, near the town of Jarnac, which gave name to the battle ; and was rendered memorable not only by the victory which the Catholics obtained, but as the concluding day of the prince of Condé's life*.

On

* The victory of Jarnac must be entirely attributed to the prodigious disparity of numbers ; as the Hugonot infantry being almost all absent from the field of action, only the cavalry disputed the day, with a courage and constancy

1569. On that memorable occasion, he behaved
with almost unexampled heroism. His arm,
from

constancy that approached to frenzy. The Duke of Anjou having passed his army in the night, unobserved, across the river Charente, Coligny was first attacked. The prince of Condé, who lay at some distance, galloping immediately to his assistance, made a masterly disposition, and sustained for a long time, with far inferior strength, the whole shock of the Catholic army.

D'Andelot, who had been left with only a hundred and twenty horse, to delay the enemy, and consequently give time to Condé to range his soldiery in order of battle, performed this dangerous commission with his accustomed intrepidity and success ; filling the place in which he had taken his stand, with confusion and carnage. At the beginning of the attack, he rode up to the Duke de Monsalez, who led on the first squadrons of the Catholic horse ; and lifting up with his bridle-hand, the vizor of the Duke's helmet, discharged, with the other, a pistol into his face, and laid him dead on the ground. —Overborne by numbers, d'Andelot at length gave way, and retired to the main body.

Here the engagement was renewed with incredible obstinacy ; the Admiral and his brother, who were posted in the left wing, maintaining the combat for near an hour, against the young Duke of Guise. But, the royal army being continually supplied with fresh troops, Coligny's own standard being beat to the ground,

from the consequences of an accident, had been 1569. rendered nearly useless to him, at the time when

ground, and the van completely routed, they deemed it unavailing to continue the fight, and provided for their safety by retreat. In the right wing, the Counts of Montgomeri and of La Rochefoucault, disputed with equal courage the glory of the day ; but were finally compelled to quit the field with precipitation.

Of the principal leaders, only the prince of Condé remained, incapable of turning his back, tho' encompassed by superior numbers. Being in the centre, he had encountered, in the beginning of the action, the Duke of Anjou's own squadron. Repeatedly charged and broken by the royal forces, he nevertheless rallied his men, and returned to the engagement. Even when almost deserted, after the retreat of his adherents, and when totally surrounded by the opposite army, he fought with invincible courage. Tho' his horse was killed under him, and himself wounded in many places, he still continued to ward off the blows aimed at him, with one knee upon the ground, till Montesquiou put an end to his life.

The Duke of Anjou, who behaved with the utmost bravery in this action, manifested a spirit above his years. His horse being killed under him, he once narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy, as he was fighting valiantly at the head of his squadrons. After the prince of Condé's death, no farther resistance was made : it became a flight, and evening, which drew on, in

1569. when the engagement began; and by a singular fatality, as he advanced to meet the enemy, his brother-in-law the Count de la Rochefoucault's horse rearing, fractured his leg. Unmoved by so painful a trial of his fortitude, and disdaining to betray any emotions unbecoming him, in that important moment, he coolly turned to those around him; “Learn,” said he, “that unruly horses do more injury than service, in an army!”—An instant after, previous to the charge, addressing his followers, “French nobility,” said he, “know that the prince of Condé, with one arm in a scarf, and a leg broken, is not afraid to give battle, since you attend him!”

The fortune of the day was unfavorable to the Hugonots; and the prince, thrown from his horse, being surrounded, was taken prisoner. Overcome with fatigue and wounded, they seated him at the foot of a tree; when

in some measure befriended the vanquished Hugonots. Most of these particulars are drawn from Davila; and many others are omitted, less interesting. De Thou coincides with the above-mentioned historian, in all the principal circumstances respecting this engagement.

Montesquiou, captain of the Duke of Anjou's Swiss guards, galloped up to the spot. Having demanded who he was, and being informed, “Tuez, tuez, mordieu!” said he; and drawing out a pistol, discharged a ball into the prince's head, which instantly killed him. The cool barbarity of this assassination, committed upon a man disarmed and defenceless, after the heat of the action was past, excited universal abhorrence; and the enormity of the act, was rendered more conspicuous, from the high rank of the person thus put to death. The Duke of Anjou neither avowed, nor punished Montesquiou; but he appeared to convey an indirect approbation of his conduct, by permitting the prince's body to be laid upon an ass, and carried to the castle of Jarnac, where he went himself to lodge the same night*.

Thus

* Tho' Davila does not speak of the prince of Condé's death, as of an assassination, yet such it must be regarded, and the French historians are unanimous on this point. Davila, however, relates the circumstance of his being carried across a *pack-horse*, to the castle of Jarnac, to the joy and savage diversion of the whole army,

1569. Thus fell Louis, the first prince of Condé, by the hand of an assassin, rather than of a soldier.

army, who jested at this melancholy and affecting spectacle. But, he adds, that the Duke of Anjou would not suffer any indignity to be offered to his body, in consideration of the prince's alliance to the blood royal. He owns all the sublime and shining qualities of Condé, only lamenting that they were obscured by rebellion.

De Thou, after relating the desperate bravery with which the prince continued to dispute the field, even after the retreat of the Admiral, and notwithstanding the disparity of numbers ; says, that “ Condé being at “ length left almost alone, and his horse falling upon “ him, in that situation he recognized two officers of “ the royal army, named Tison d'Argence, and St. “ Jean. Having raised the vizor of his helmet, that “ he might render himself known, he surrendered to “ them, under their promise to save his life ; but, “ Montesquiou riding up while the prince was speak- “ ing to them, instantly discharged a ball into him “ from behind, of which he expired.”

De Thou celebrates with the warmest panegyrics, his valor, liberality, eloquence, talents, and numerous virtues, in which he was equalled by few of the princes his contemporaries, and excelled by none. He reproaches the indignities offered to Condé's remains, dis- honoring only to those by whom such insults were per- mitted. He insinuates plainly, that Montesquiou acted
by

soldier. The unhappy circumstances of the times, and the impossibility of reposing any confidence

by secret orders; and that he did not commit so base an assassination on the person of a prince of the blood, without knowing that it would meet with approbation. He even mentions a singular circumstance, highly tending to corroborate this suspicion: “The Duke of Anjou,” says de Thou, “after the engagement, communicated to those persons who were in his confidence, his determination to cause a chapel to be erected over the spot, on which the prince of Condé was killed. This idea had been suggested to him by some ecclesiastics; but he relinquished it on the advice of Carnavalet, his preceptor, who represented to him, that it would confirm the opinion already entertained in both armies, that Montesquiou had assassinated the prince by his express directions.”

“We found him,” says the writer of the Duke of Montpensier’s life, “lying across an ass; and the Baron de Magnac asked me, if I should know him again? But, as he had one eye beat out of his head, and was otherwise much disfigured, I knew not what to answer. The corpse was brought in before all the princes and lords, who ordered the face to be washed, and recognized him perfectly. They then put him into a sheet, and he was carried before a man on horseback, to the castle of Jarnac; where Monseigneur, the king’s brother, went to lodge.”

Brantome has likewise given us many interesting circumstances

1569. ~~the~~ confidence in the engagements or stipulations of the government, had in some degree necessitated him, tho' allied by blood to the crown, to unsheathe the sword against his sovereign.

cumstances of this tragical event. "The prince," says he, "fought with a courage heightened by despair, on that day; but he was soon beat to the ground by superior numbers. It had been recommended to the Duke of Anjou's favorites, to kill Condé at all events; and Henry himself did not disguise the joy which he felt at the execution of his orders. When the action was over, he chose to gratify his eyes with the sight of the dead body; and it was then thrown, in derision, across an old she-ass, the head and legs dangling down on either side. It even remained during the ensuing night, in a room exactly under the apartment in which the Duke himself slept. After having been exposed to the view of the whole army, it was restored to the Duke of Longueville, his brother-in-law, who interred him with his ancestors at Vendome. There was made on him this sarcastic epitaph :

" L'an mil cinq cens soixante neuf,
 " Entre Jarnac et Chateau-neuf,
 " Fut porté sur un anesse,
 " Cil qui vouloit oster la Messe."

Brantome says, he intimately knew Montesquiou, and adds, that he was a brave and gallant gentleman : at the subsequent siege of St. John d'Angeli, he was killed by a musket shot.

The

The great talents for military command which he possessed, justly rendered him the hero of his own, and the terror of the opposite party. There is too much reason to believe, that the young Duke of Anjou authorized, if he did not enjoin, the captain of his guard to put him to death. Henry was not naturally destitute of humanity: but, besides that the prince had been his rival for the lieutenancy of the kingdom, and was on that account peculiarly an object of his detestation; the court was fully persuaded that in the person of Condé, the whole Hugonot faction must infallibly be destroyed*.

* Voltaire, in his beautiful poem of the “Henryade,” introduces Henry the fourth pathetically lamenting the prince of Condé’s death. It is to our Elizabeth, that he is there supposed to relate the story; and the lines are so masterly and affecting, that it is difficult to peruse them without emotion. Henry himself exclaims :

“ O ! Plaines de Jarnac ! O ! coup trop inhumain !
 “ Barbare Montesquiou, moins guerrier qu’assassin,
 “ Condé déjà mourant, tomba sous ta furie ;
 “ J’ai vu porter le coup ; j’ai vu trancher sa vie.
 “ Hélas ! trop jeune encore, mon bras, mon foible
 “ bras,
 “ Ne put ni prévenir, ni venger son trepas.”

1569. Coligny, who with the broken remains of the cavalry, had retreated to St. John d'Angeli, after the defeat of Jarnac; naturally became by the tragical death of the prince, the leader of the Calvinist forces. He was in every respect equal to, and calculated for this arduous station. More advanced in years than Condé, he joined the experience of a veteran commander, to the most intrepid courage, and the most distinguished military talents. Loyal to his prince, even while engaged in rebellion; ardently zealous for the glory of his country, tho' a fatal necessity compelled him to appear in arms against the crown; nature had designed him to promote its grandeur and prosperity. In happier times he would have been found the guardian of France, whose arms he was ever anxious to direct against her natural enemy, the scourge of Europe, Philip the second. Of a character less ambitious than the prince of Condé, he was ever ready to accept the overtures of peace; but, more attached to the religious principles of Calvinism, and not seduced by love or pleasure to sacrifice them, he steadily pursued those objects, for the defence

fence of which he had first drawn his sword. 1569.
Fertile in resources, capacious in his projects, rising on his very defeats, and unappalled in circumstances the most distressful ; he long sustained with inferior force, the utmost efforts of his victorious enemies.

Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, a princess endowed with virtues and qualities of the most estimable kind, and inheriting from her mother, Margaret of Valois, a strength of mind and elegance of genius rarely found even among men, aided the Admiral's measures for the protection and preservation of the Hugonot party. Having accompanied her son Henry, who was as yet in very early youth, from Nerac to Rochelle, she there harangued the troops, drawn up for the purpose ; and Coligny was immediately declared general of the forces, under the prince of Navarre, and his cousin, Henry, the young prince of Condé.

The intelligence of the victory at Jarnac, and the death of the Hugonot leader, were received at Paris with unusual demonstrations of joy, as the certain forerunners of the destruction of the party. The king rose at midnight to sing 'Te-Deum in person, an-

1569. nounced it to all the sovereign princes of Europe, and sent the standards gained in the action, to Rome, as a present the most acceptable to the sovereign pontiff. But, the real advantages resulting from it to the royal cause, were very inconsiderable. The Duke of Anjou, notwithstanding his recent success, was repulsed before Cognac: while Coligny, reinforced from every quarter, re-appeared in the field, more formidable from the late May 27. reverse. The death of his brother, d'Andelot, who died about this time, of a pestilential fever, at the city of Saintes, was an event deeply regretted by all his adherents, who lost in him a commander eminent for intrepidity and resources.

In little more than two months after his defeat, the Admiral, at the head of a numerous army, again opposed the Duke of Anjou in the Limousin; after having, in defiance of the royal forces, effected a junction with Count Mansfeldt, who led to his assistance a large reinforcement of German auxiliaries. In a June 25. considerable skirmish which took place at the village of La Roche Abeille, the Hugonots were even victorious: while the Count de Montgomeri, one of their most active and

enterprizing generals, after having reduced all the Province of Bearn to obedience, extended his ravages even into Languedoc. 1569.

Coligny, encouraged by these prosperous events, determined once more to pass the Loire, with a view of carrying the war to the gates of Paris, as the only effectual means to procure its termination: but, unfortunately, having afterwards changed his resolution, he undertook the siege of Poitiers. Henry, the July 25. young Duke of Guise, son to Francis, and not inferior to his father in talents, in courage, or in ambition, had thrown himself into the place. Anxious to signalize himself in this, his first military command, and animated by personal detestation of the Admiral, whom he ever regarded as having been implicated in his father's assassination, he made an able and resolute defence. Coligny, compelled at length by the Duke of Anjou's near approach, who had laid siege to Chatelleraud in the vicinity; and finding his forces diminished by the loss of above two thousand men, who had fallen under the walls of Poitiers, retired without Sept. 7. success from before the city. The battle of Moncontour, which followed only a few days Oct. 3.

1569. afterwards, seemed to menace with total destruction the Hugonot party.

The action, which was obstinately contested, lasted more than three hours; when victory declared a second time for Henry and the Catholics. Near nine thousand French and Germans of the vanquished side, were left upon the field. Scarcely could Coligny, wounded in the face, and accompanied by about three hundred cavalry, who in some measure checked the pursuit of the conquerors, secure his retreat to the town of Parthenai*.

Any

* The battle of Moncontour was the most bloody and decisive engagement, which was fought during the whole course of the civil wars. It began two hours after sun-rise, towards eight in the morning, and lasted till past ten: Coligny, who knew that the Catholics were superior to his own forces in discipline, still more than in numbers, would have declined a contest, the inequality of which was visible. But, the clamors of the troops, and peculiarly of the German auxiliaries, who demanded their arrears, and refused to retreat before the Catholics, compelled him reluctantly to hazard the issue of a battle.

It was disputed with such incredible obstinacy and mutual antipathy, that the very sutlers, lacqueys, and pioneers of either camp, took a part in the engagement;

A mind less vigorous, or less inured to 1569.
adversity, must have sunk under this severe
reverse,

ment; and each individual fought, as if on his personal exertion alone, the fortune of the day depended. The event was long doubtful; but, at length the Switzers in the royal army having cut to pieces the Germans, of whom out of four thousand, scarcely two hundred remained alive, a general rout succeeded.

Henry, Duke of Anjou, signalized his bravery, and appeared in the first ranks of danger. He more than once narrowly escaped being killed; having rushed into the thickest squadrons of the enemy, where the Marquis of Baden fell by his side. But, the Admiral united on that day, all the impetuous courage of youth, with the resources and ability of an able and experienced general. The Rhinegrave, who commanded the German troops in the royal army, having encountered him in person, fired a pistol into his face, beat out four of his teeth, and broke his jaw. But, Coligny discharging his own pistol into the Rhinegrave's vizor, laid him instantly dead upon the ground. The Admiral afterwards continued obstinately fighting, tho' the blood ran in such quantity from his wound, as to fill both his helmet and gorget.

At length, seeing his troops dispersed on all sides, and flying before the Catholics; his voice, which was quite spent, scarcely capable of being heard; himself covered with blood, and sinking under fatigue; he found it useless longer to dispute the field. Retiring

1569. reverse, which following after so short an interval, the defeat of Jarnac, appeared to leave the Hugonots without resource, at the mercy of the crown. But, the Admiral, far from betraying any marks of despondency, seemed to find resources in his very misfortune. On the evening of the same day when the battle was lost, tho' almost incapable of speaking, from the effects of his wound, he held a council of his chief officers ; when messengers were dispatched to England, Switzerland, and the principal German Protestant states, to announce his critical situation, and recent defeat. Having demanded of those

therefore, with the two young princes of Navarre and of Condé, who had remained at some distance during the action, he reached Parthenai the same evening, at six leagues distance from Moncontour, only accompanied by three hundred cavalry. The Counts of Mansfeldt and Nassau, with about two thousand of their men, joined him at night, having retreated in good order, and stopped the pursuit of the conquerors. The Duke of Anjou commanded quarter to be given to three thousand of the French infantry, who had thrown down their arms. Near two hundred colors were taken from the Hugonots.—These particulars are principally extracted from Davila, with whom De Thou and Mezerai agree in almost all the circumstances.

powers,

powers, in the common cause of the Reformed religion, an immediate supply of troops and money, without which it was evident that the consequences to his party must be fatal ; he retired with the two princes of Navarre and Condé, into the adjoining province of Saintonge. There collecting the scattered fugitives dispersed at Moncontour, and being joined by a number of adherents who flocked to his standard, he soon found himself in a condition to oppose new impediments to the progress of the royal arms.

The errors of the victorious party contributed perhaps not less to the extrication of the Hugonots, than did their own spirit and resources. If the Duke of Anjou had instantly pursued an enemy, broken and dispirited by so many defeats, before they had sufficiently recovered themselves to appear again in the field ; he must either have succeeded in completely crushing them, or might at least have rendered them incapable of any effectual resistance. But, the siege of the city of St. John d'Angeli, which he immediately undertook, destroyed the beneficial consequences of the late victory. The defence made by the besieged,

1569.



<img alt="decorative flourish"

1569. besieged, gave time for Coligny to assemble a new army; and winter advancing, imposed limits to the operations of the Catholic forces. Other impediments of a more delicate and personal nature, had likewise arisen out of the very victories themselves acquired by Henry, which seemed to render him at once the champion of the Catholic faith, and the idol of the soldiery. Charles, who had for some time beheld his brother's glory with natural jealousy, and who possessed equal courage, as well as ambition, could no longer be restrained from appearing personally in the army. Catherine, attached to the Duke of Anjou with peculiar tenderness, and anxiously desirous of maintaining him in the exclusive command of the forces, exerted every endeavor, but, in vain, to withhold the king. Her pertinacious opposition only served to irritate him, without changing his determination.

Oct. 26. On Charles's arrival in the camp before St. John d'Angeli, he appeared to be altogether transported with the scene. Regardless of danger, he was constantly present in the trenches, exposed his person like the meanest soldier, and publicly declared that he would
gladly

gladly share the crown with his brother ^{1569.} ~~the~~ Henry, so that he might alternately command the forces*.

After a siege of two months the city capitulated : but La Noue, and the Count de la Rochefoucault, stills ~~ustained~~ ^{Dec. 2.} Hugonot party in Rochelle, which seemed to bid defiance to the power of the crown ; its situ-

* Charles, who early saw with discontent, his mother's partiality for the Duke of Anjou, complained of it to her, in terms of indignation. His temper, naturally impetuous and violent, could not support this preference of his younger brother. Catherine on the other hand, fearing that Charles, who was endowed with great capacity for business, would not always be held in tutelage ; dreaded that he might finally dispense with her counsels, and deprive her of all power. Henry's natural indolence and submission secured her from those apprehensions, in case that he should ever mount the throne.

An anecdote which Brantome mentions, very strongly proves the king's dissatisfaction at Henry's success, and at his early reputation. Soon after the battle of Moncontour, the poet Dorat having presented his majesty with some verses in his own praise—“ It is ‘‘ not to me,” said Charles, “ that these encomiums ‘‘ are due! I have not merited any panegyrics, or per- ‘‘ formed any great actions. To my brother they may ‘‘ indeed justly be addressed, who is every day em- ‘‘ ployed in acquiring renown in the field.”

1569. tion on the ocean enabling the inhabitants with facility to receive succors of every kind from foreign states. Meanwhile Coligny, conscious that he could no longer maintain the unequal contest against a superior and victorious enemy, in provinces already exhausted or devastated, conceived the bold idea of transferring the war to the other extremity of France. With this determination, not less difficult in the execution, than hardy in its conception; having assembled all his adherents near the city of Saintes, he commenced a march almost unexampled in the modern history of war. In defiance of the inclemency of winter, of so many considerable rivers which intersected or impeded his course, of the royal generals and Catholic forces stationed to oppose his progress; he traversed all the provinces at the foot of the Pyrenees, and the whole of Languedoc. Then remounting the banks of the Rhone, he appeared in Burgundy

1570. June. at the beginning of the ensuing summer, after having carried terror thro' a great portion of the French monarchy*.

It

* The march of Coligny thro' so many provinces, destitute of artillery, money, baggage, or ammunition; and

It was not without the utmost repugnance, 1570.
accompanying with the liveliest emotions of indignation, that the king submitted to see his
dominions

and the resources by which he maintained and supported his broken troops, under such distressful circumstances, convey the highest ideas of his military talents. The princes of Navarre and of Condé, early inured to the dangers and fatigues of a camp, accompanied him thro' the whole course of this perilous enterprize; sharing every privation of their leader, and of their party. The Hugonots left bloody traces of their passage, in all the provinces thro' which they passed; peculiarly in the environs of Toulouse, where the inhabitants were distinguished by their antipathy to the Reformed religion. Having remained during the severity of winter, near the shore of the Mediterranean, in the vicinity of Narbonne; they traversed Languedoc early in the spring, returned along the Rhone, and marching to the banks of the Loire, arrived towards the end of May, in the province of Forez, at the little town of St. Etienne. Here Coligny was attacked with a malignant fever, which stopped the advance of the army for three weeks, during which time the camp was plunged in the deepest consternation. But, recovering, after imminent danger of his life, from this distemper, he conducted his forces into Burgundy, where they reappeared in the middle of June.

The following song, says Brantome, was commonly sung by the Hugonot soldiers, after Louis, prince of Condé's

1570. dominions thus ravaged by an enemy, who had been so recently vanquished, and who appeared to be incapable of further resistance. In the transports of his resentment, he would even have followed Coligny immediately at the head of his forces, if the queen-mother, who dreaded his assuming the command in person, had not prevented him by means of the remonstrances of the Marechal de Tavannes. That General having assured his majesty, that the troops were already too much exhausted and broken by the last campaign, to attempt any new enterprize in so advanced a season, Charles reluctantly permitted them to withdraw into winter-quarters.

The re-appearance of Coligny in the heart of France, at the head of a formidable army, June 25. was followed by the combat of Arnay-le-Duc in Burgundy, where the Hugonots manifestly

Condé's untimely death, and on the succession of the Admiral to the supreme command of the forces.

“ Le prince de Condé,
 “ Il a été tué ;
 “ Mais Monsieur l'Admiral
 “ Est encore à cheval,
 “ Avec La Rochefoucault,
 “ Pour chasser tous ces papaux, papaux, papaux !”
 obtained

obtained the advantage. Under these circumstances, it became almost a matter of state necessity to enter into a treaty with men, whom it was found impossible to reduce to subjection by force of arms. The universal disorder, approaching to anarchy, under which the kingdom suffered, and the apprehension of still greater misfortunes that were to be dreaded from a continuance of the war, at length produced a negotiation for the termination of hostilities. The Duke of Anjou, whose health had suffered from the fatigues of the preceding campaign, having retired under that pretext to the palace of St. Germain, Charles conferred the supreme command of the royal forces on the Marechal de Cossé. That general, either unable, or as his enemies accused him, not inclined to push Coligny to extremities; allowed the summer to elapse without coming to any decisive action. Peace, ^{Aug. 15.} therefore, so long and anxiously desired, was again re-established on terms not unfavorable to the Hugonots. Charles solemnly swore to observe the treaty inviolate, and to protect them in every right which it conferred, either civil or religious.

1570. The interests of the crown and of the monarchy seemed to guarantee its duration, after the calamities by which France had been so long desolated. But, the perfidy of the government, and the intolerance of the age, did not allow of repose. All these flattering appearances concealed the most atrocious designs; and Catherine, convinced by experience that Coligny and the Calvinists were not to be reduced by open force, had already planned the massacre, which she executed two years afterwards, in the capital. All the intermediate period was employed by the court, in the most consummate dissimulation; in the arts of lulling to sleep the party intended for extermination. A system of vengeance so flagitious, as well as so unprecedented in the records of mankind, excites hardly less astonishment than it awakens abhorrence. Its existence, which cannot be questioned, has not only consigned to perpetual detestation, the principal authors of it; but has rendered the period of time, and the French nation itself, in some measure odious to succeeding generations.

Pleasure and dissipation, which seemed to engage

engage the whole court, allowed the queen-mother to mature her plans, which demanded time, and a vast variety of combinations, before they could be ripe for execution. The marriage of Margaret of Valois, sister to the king, with Henry, prince of Navarre, was already proposed by Catherine, with the obvious intention of confirming the late peace, and of obliterating the remembrance of past animosities. It constituted the first and indispensable preliminary, by which to draw the Hugonots into the snare*.

1570.

The

* It cannot be considered as beneath the dignity of history, to mention the amours of Margaret of Valois, one of the most beautiful and accomplished, but, dissolute princesses of modern times. So depraved was her mind, and so impetuous were her passions, that at twelve years old, she is said to have sacrificed to them her honor. The young Entragues, and Charry, a captain in the royal guards, disputed the precedence in her affections, when she was about that age. Her warm and animated attachment to her own brother Henry, Duke of Anjou, gave rise to similar suspicions ; which, indeed, her character, conduct, and writings, all tend to confirm. Henry was handsome, amiable, and unprincipled. The libertinism of the court authorized every species of profligacy. The Duke of Guise was unquestionably

1570. The young Duke of Guise, attached to the princess, and mutually beloved by her, attempted

tionably beloved by Margaret with the warmest passion ; a fact which she herself does not disguise in her Memoirs ; and the Duke of Anjou withdrew from her his confidence, when he found the Duke of Guise master of her person and affections.

In the celebrated Manifesto or Exposition, which Henry the fourth caused to be drawn up, and presented to pope Clement the eighth, as a justification of his conduct in soliciting a divorce from Margaret, he minutely enumerates her excesses, and names her successive lovers.

“ The princess,” says the Manifesto, “ was only eleven years old, when she began to yield to the pleasures of love. Entragues and Charry were in turn favored by her ; and the former carried his proofs of attachment to such a length, as nearly to sacrifice to it his life. The prince of Martigues succeeded to their place, and was fondly beloved ; but, naturally vain, he could not conceal an intrigue so flattering, and divulged the secret of their amours, which became universally known. He always wore on the most dangerous occasions, an embroidered scarf, which his royal mistress had presented him, together with a beautiful little dog, given by the same hand.

“ The tears which she shed for this favorite’s death, were dried by the Duke of Guise ; who became in turn her paramour, by the good offices of Madame de Carnavalet.”—“ On pretend,” continues Henry, “ que

tempted to raise obstacles to the projected marriage, with the hope of obtaining her hand. But, Charles, who unquestionably considered his sister as the principal instrument, where-with to allure Coligny and the Calvinist chiefs to repair to the court, rejected with violence every proposition which would overturn a plan that lay so near his heart. Highly irritated at the Duke's presumption, he even issued orders secretly to his own natural brother, Henry, Count d'Angoulesme, to put him to death, as he went to the chace. Warned of the king's intention, and anxious to deprecate the effects of his resentment, the Duke of Guise appeased him by a speedy marriage

“ que les ducs d'Anjou et d'Alençon troublerent cette
 “ intrigue ; et qu'elle eut pour eux des complaisances,
 “ que le droit du sang n'autorisoit pas ; mais je ne puis
 “ croire que sa débauche ait été jusqu'à cet exces.”

However improbable it may appear, yet all these lovers preceded her marriage to the king of Navarre ; and the Manifesto continues the enumeration of her subsequent irregularities and gallantries, which almost exceed the bounds of credibility. Yet, Henry, in the beginning of this extraordinary piece, which is opened with the greatest solemnity, calls on God to witness the veracity of his assertions, and the integrity of his intentions.

1570. ~~1570.~~ with Catherine of Cleves, widow to the prince of Portien*.

The nuptials of the king himself followed
soon

* Davila confirms the attachment of the Duke of Guise to the princess Margaret ; and says, that she long persisted peremptorily to refuse any other husband.—“ One night,” adds he, “ there being a ball at court, as the Duke was going into the great hall of the palace, dressed with the utmost magnificence, adorned with jewels, he met the king, who had placed himself purposely at the door. Charles, with an angry air, asked him, Whither he was going ?” The Duke answered, “ That he came to serve his majesty.” “ I have no occasion for your services,” replied he.—Henry, who saw the danger in which he had involved himself, determined instantly to recover his sovereign’s favor, by putting it out of his own power to be longer obnoxious.

De Thou, as well as Mezerai, confirm in the strongest terms, the unconcealed and reciprocal passion of Margaret and the Duke of Guise : they likewise mention the order issued by Charles the ninth to dispatch the Duke, of which he received intimation from Francis de Balzac-Entragues.—Davila adds, that it was commonly believed, a promise of marriage had been exchanged by the two lovers : but, that the Duke of Guise, either from inconstancy, ambition, or desire of satiating his revenge upon Coligny ; whom it was requisite to draw into the snare, by the lure of this marriage

soon after those of the Duke. Having already entered into his twenty-first year, Catherine, who had vainly solicited the hand of Elizabeth, queen of England, for her son ; selected the Archduchess Elizabeth, daughter of the emperor Maximilian the second, to become queen of France. The Dukes of Anjou and of Alençon, Charles's brothers, were sent to receive the princess on her arrival at Sedan ; and he himself advanced to meet her, as far as the town of Mezieres in Champagne, where the nuptials were solemnized. She was an amiable and virtuous princess, devout, humble, and submissive. Her capacity, limited and slender, gave Catherine no alarm ; and she was neither consulted in, nor privy to any of the sanguinary measures, which were pursued during her husband's reign. Tho' agreeable in her person, and gentle in her manners, yet she never attained any ascendancy over Charles's heart, which was already occupied by another*. Mary Touche^t,

Nov.
26.

riage between the prince of Navarre and Margaret ; desisted from any further prosecution of his claims on the princess, and contracted another alliance.

* Elizabeth of Austria, daughter of Maximilian the second,

1570. chet, his mistress, had long reigned in his affections without a rival ; and appears to have maintained undiminished her influence over him, to the latest moments of his life*.

During

second, born in June, 1554, was only sixteen years of age, at the time of her marriage with Charles the ninth. The Duke of Anjou was sent at the head of a magnificent train of nobility, to receive the young queen at Sedan ; to which city the king himself repaired incognito, in order to view her person ; and then returned to Mezieres, where the marriage ceremony was performed with becoming splendor. She possessed all the characteristic superstition of the house of Austria, and carried her religious exercises to a length injurious to her health ; but, her conjugal affection, and sweetness of disposition, rendered her universally beloved. Brantome always mentions her with the warmest expressions of approbation, as one of the most virtuous and amiable queens who had ever appeared in France. He says that her person was more than merely agreeable : “ Elle etoit une tres belle Princesse,” adds he, “ ayant le teint de son visage aussi beau et delicat que dame de sa cour, et fort agreable. Elle avoit la taille fort belle aussi, encore qu’elle l’eut moyenne assez.”—This description must certainly be allowed to convey an idea of a pretty woman.

* Mary Touchet was daughter to the “ Lieutenant Particulier” of Orleans. The precise time when Charles’s

During the ceremony of the young queen's coronation, which took place soon afterwards ^{Mar. 25,} at St. Denis, the queen-mother, whose mag-

Charles's attachment to her commenced, is not ascertained; but, it appears from an anecdote related of her, that she had acquired the highest influence over him before his marriage, since it is clear that she dreaded no rival. Brantome says, that Elizabeth of Austria's portrait being shewn her, she exclaimed, after having long and attentively regarded it, “*L'Allemaude ne me fait pas peur!*”—Her personal and mental attractions were equally pre-eminent; but her ascendancy over the young king her lover, never extended to affairs of state, nor enabled her to guide the counsels of the sovereign, as the Duchesses of Valentinois and Estampes had done under Francis the first, and Henry the second. “*I have seen her picture,*” says the author of the *Anecdotes des Reines et Regentes de France*, “*done in Crayons, and during the prime of her beauty.*” The contour of her face was round, her eyes finely shaped and lively, her forehead small, her nose justly proportioned, her mouth little and crimson, the lower part of her face admirable.” Such was the celebrated Mary Touchet. She became by her marriage with Francis de Balzac-Entragues, the mother of Henriette de Balzac, mistress to Henry the fourth of France, and created by him Marchioness of Verneuil.—Mary Touchet died at the advanced age of eighty-nine years, in March, 1638.

1571. nificence and taste eminently appeared on these occasions, displayed all her talents in the entertainments which were exhibited at court. The fictions of antiquity, as well as the ingenious allegories of Greek and Roman fable, were called in, to embellish the representations. A degree of refinement, superior to the general progress which the human mind had made in the sixteenth century ; and little inferior to the productions of elegance afterwards displayed under Louis the fourteenth ; characterized all the amusements of Catherine. Her abilities were equally distinguished in the deliberations of the cabinet, or in the disposition of a banquet ; whether directed to the destruction, or to the delight of mankind. She appears to have united in her composition, qualities which are usually esteemed to be the most opposite and discordant. Her versatility of mind enabled her to pass with the easiest transition, from the horrors of war, to all the dissipations characteristic of peace ; and we are compelled to lament that a capacity so distinguished, should have wanted those principles for its guidance and restraint, without which she became the scourge of the nation,

tion, for whose felicity she seemed to have ^{1571.} ~~been~~ designed by nature*.

The project of deceiving the Hugonot leaders, and attracting them to the capital, from this time totally occupied the queen-mother. The king her son, whom she had instructed in all the lessons of a profound and pernicious dissimulation, performed an active part in persuading them to repose unlimited confidence on his good faith. Subservient to

* It is wonderful to consider, that in the entertainments given at court on Elizabeth's coronation, the peculiar situation of the state was enigmatically pourtrayed under various forms, which exhibited a political mirror, under the appearance of an amusement. Charles the ninth was represented in the character of Jupiter ; Catherine, in that of Juno ; the young queen, in that of Minerva. The Hugonots appeared under the names of Typhon and the Giants. Even the massacre of St. Bartholomew, already planned, was darkly alluded to in the mottos and devices chosen, of which the following was one, addressed to the king :

“ Cadme, relinque ratem ; pastoria sibila finge ;

“ Fas superare dolo, quem vis non vincit aperta.”

The meaning of this remark is too evidently connected with the ensuing massacre, to be mistaken ; nor can we avoid being surprized that allusions so obvious, should not have awakened more suspicion and distrust of the court, in the minds of the Calvinist leaders.

the

1571. the treacherous and sanguinary politics of ~~the~~ Catherine, he did not scruple to stain the Majesty of the throne, with the blood of his own subjects, whom he previously seduced to trust in his promises of protection. Even those qualities of his character and disposition, which, properly directed, might have guaranteed the public tranquillity, were transformed by her influence, into vices. His natural prudence and penetration, she converted into a subtle and perfidious policy: his natural vivacity of temper, became passion and fury; his courage degenerated into stern ferocity; while his heart, shut against the impressions of benevolence and pity, was inflamed with a savage thirst of vengeance.— For Catherine, no justification can be suggested; but it appears difficult not to extend some degree of pardon to the crimes of Charles the ninth. Accustomed from his infancy to precepts, as well as to examples the most depraved, and encouraged to spill the blood of his subjects, as an act meritorious and acceptable to Heaven; he became the instrument of crimes, at which his reason, no less than his sensibility, must have revolted,

volted, if the one and the other had not ^{1571.} ~~been~~ been perverted, or wholly extinguished.

So distrustful were the principal Hugonot leaders, and so little were they disposed to confide in the protestations of Catherine, or the invitations of Charles ; that it was long doubtful whether they could be induced to quit the protection of their own fortresses, in order to visit the capital. Every artifice was therefore used, and every appearance of cordiality was assumed, to convince the queen of Navarre and Coligny, that the king was determined to maintain the peace inviolate. Their deputies, who had been dispatched to Paris, were sent back, after a reception the most gracious, with the amplest confirmation of every article of the late treaty. Count Ludovic of Nassau, one of their chiefs, having quitted Rochelle in disguise, and waited on Charles at Lumigny ; was received by August. him with uncommon distinction, and loaded with favors. As a further mark of the king's affection, Teligni, son-in-law to the Admiral, was dispatched to him, with a request that he would lay aside all distrust, and repose himself with full security on the royal honor.

Confiding in this pledge, Coligny at length resolved

1571. ~~Sept.~~ resolved to give the strongest proof of his implicit reliance on the sincerity of his sovereign, by repairing to Blois, where the court then resided. Charles embraced him on his arrival, with testimonies of the warmest attachment: he gave Coligny the endearing epithet of Father, and professed for him a filial deference and respect. The Admiral was re-admitted to take his seat in council, received from the royal bounty a donation of an hundred thousand livres, and the restoration of all his estates. After having permitted him to visit his castle of Chatillon, ~~Dec.~~ the king again recalled him, redoubled his caresses, bestowed on him numberless favors, and even carried his dissimulation to such a length, that the Duke of Guise, and the more zealous Catholics, took the alarm. They began to be apprehensive lest Coligny should really effect that alteration in Charles's disposition, which at first they knew was only assumed, in order to render the destruction of the Hugonots inevitable*.

When

* Never, probably, were dissimulation and treachery carried to a greater length, nor more completely covered with

When the Admiral withdrew a second time 1572.
 from court, the king still maintained a con- ^{Feb.}
 tinual and unreserved communication with
 him by letters. Charles re-assured him of
 his determination to complete the nuptials of
 his sister Margaret with the prince of Na-
 varre ; and artfully professed his intention of

with the mask of affection, than on the occasion of Coligny's return to court. When the Admiral embraced his sovereign's knee, the king raised him up, assured him that it was the happiest moment of his reign, and smiling added, “ *Enfin, nous vous tenons ;*” “ *vous ne vous éloignerez plus de nous, quand vous le voudrez.*”—All acts of grace and favor were obtained by the Admiral's solicitation, nor was there any thing too difficult to be effected by his powerful interposition. The Protestant leaders were constantly near the king's person, and all partook of the royal munificence. Davila says, that a young nobleman, named Villandry, who had offended Charles the ninth at play, in so heinous a degree as to be condemned to die : and whose pardon the king had refused to his mother, to the young queen his wife, and to the Duke of Anjou ; was nevertheless instantly forgiven at Coligny's intercession, and even restored to his former familiarity with the king. Mezerai, as well as de Thou, confirm and recapitulate the many perfidious marks of dissembled kindness, shewn by Charles and the queen-mother to Coligny, during his visit to the court.

shaking

1572. shaking off the fetters, in which his mother and the Duke of Anjou had hitherto held him. As the last flattering bait, he declared his intention of sending an army into the Netherlands, to assist the revolted provinces against Philip the second, at the head of which body of forces Coligny should himself be placed. The Admiral, who was animated equally by attachment to his country, and by indignation against Spanish bigotry and oppression, could no longer resist so animating a motive. Not satisfied with trusting his own safety to the king's assurances, he persuaded the queen of Navarre to visit the king and his mother at Blois, where Jane d'Albret was April. received with an excess of honors, and dissembled affection. The negotiation for her son's marriage being resumed, was finally concluded ; the dispensation from Rome, which was long refused by Pius the fifth, who then filled the papal chair, alone delaying the consummation of their nuptials *.

New

* Demonstrations of affection and regard were shewn to the queen of Navarre, and to her son Henry, on their arrival at Blois, similar to those which had been lavished

New and domestic sources of disunion had meanwhile arisen between Charles and his brother Henry, Duke of Anjou. The reputation which that prince had acquired by the two victories of Jarnac and of Moncontour, when added to the title which he aspired to possess, of restorer and defender of the state, justly gave offence to the king. He saw himself obscured by Henry's military fame, and he deeply re-

vished upon Coligny only a few weeks preceding. De Thou relates, that Charles having demanded of his mother, after his first interview with the queen of Navarre, whether he had not played his part well? Catherine replied, " You have undoubtedly begun well; " but that will be of little avail, unless you continue :" to which Charles answered, swearing, as was his custom, " I will take them all in a net, and deliver them over to you."—The articles, and contract of marriage between Henry and Margaret, were signed on the 11th of April; Charles stipulating to give a hundred thousand crowns of gold to his sister, as her dowry.— " Margaret," says Davila, " yielding at length reluctantly to her mother's solicitations, and her brother's menaces; as well as from a regard to her own honor, which began to be very much called in question; tho' she did not absolutely consent to marry the Prince of Navarre, yet no longer openly declared her determination never to contract or submit to that alliance."

sented

1572. ~~sent~~ Catherine's unconcealed partiality for his brother. These principles of aversion and discontent began already to manifest themselves. The queen-mother, who watched with peculiar anxiety over the fortune of her second son ; and whose ambitious mind was always projecting schemes of greatness for all her children, had already turned her view towards the Polish crown. In the expectation that it would soon become vacant, she began her intrigues for procuring Henry's election to the throne of that distant kingdom. Tho' Sigismund Augustus, the reigning king, was still living, Montluc, bishop of Valence, was sent into Poland, with instructions to endeavor to secure the suffrages of the nobility ; a commission in which he succeeded beyond expectation.

It must be confessed that the Duke of Anjou presented at this time the model of an accomplished hero ; nor can we be surprized, when we consider his many brilliant external qualities, at Catherine's partial attachment to him. In his person he was finely formed and graceful. An air of majesty, tempered with condescension, accompanied all his actions ;

tions ; and his courage had been distinguished in two great engagements where he had been victorious, at a very early period of life. A dignified, and commanding eloquence, with which nature had endowed him, disposed all men in his favor ; nor had the family of Valois, since their accession to the throne of France, produced any prince, whose person and manners were more formed to captivate mankind *.

The contrast which his character presented to that of the king, tended to raise him still higher in the general estimation. Charles,

* Desportes, the most elegant poet of the times, describes him in these lines. It is the portrait of Adonis himself.

“ Il eut la taille belle, et le visage beau ;
 “ Son teint étoit de lys, et de roses pourpretés ;
 “ Et ses yeux rigoureux dardoient mille sagettés ;
 “ On le prend pour l'amour !” —

Davila conveys a high idea of the Duke of Anjou, at this period of his life ; he expatiates minutely on his uncommon personal beauty, courage, eloquence, and other eminent qualities. He says, that all mankind had their eyes fixed on him, and had conceived the greatest expectations from his future conduct. Mezerai and De Thou confirm these eulogiums.

1572. possessing more solid qualifications, and better calculated for government; endowed with vigor, discernment, activity, and judgment; but, carried away by the impetuosity of his passions; presented to view only the unamiable part of his character. Henry, under so graceful a form, and in full possession of all the military fame, which Tavannes had procured him, to whose ability the victories of Jarnac and of Moncontour were due; wanted the force of mind, and the eminent qualities with which his brother was endowed. Beneath that engaging appearance, which had conciliated so much popular admiration, was concealed an effeminate indolence, an enervate softness, a prodigality without bounds, and an indulgence to favorites, the most pernicious to his kingdom and himself.

The Duke of Anjou had not, however, as yet betrayed those errors and vices, which characterized Henry the third, on his subsequent accession to the throne. In a court so dissolute as that of Catherine of Medicis, pleasure formed a principal occupation; and his passion for Mademoiselle de Chateau-neuf, was only dissolved by the more violent attach-

attachment which he afterwards conceived for 1572.
~~~ the princess of Condé\*.

Pius the fifth, who at this time occupied the throne of St. Peter, terrified at the intention of marrying the princess Margaret to

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\* Renée de Rieux, commonly called Mademoiselle de Chateauneuf, was a beauty of the most engaging kind. Of the ancient family of Rieux in Bretagne, she had been early taken into the household, and placed near the person of Catherine of Medicis, as a maid of honor to that queen. She possessed an elegance of form and manner so peculiar to herself, that long after her retreat from court, it was thought a very high compliment to a young person, to say, “*Qu'elle avoit de l'air de Mademoiselle Chateauneuf.*”—Desportes, the Tibullus of the sixteenth century, celebrates her charms in many of his sonnets, addressed to her under the name of the Duke of Anjou. After Henry the third's return from Poland, it was the intention of that Prince to have given her in marriage to the Count de Brienne; but he quitted France, to avoid the match. She became soon afterwards the wife of a Florentine, named Antinotti, whom she killed with her own hand in 1577; but it does not appear that she was punished, or even prosecuted for this crime. Her second husband, Philip Altoviti, Baron de Castelane, of whom mention has been made in a former note; was put to death in 1586, by Henry d'Angoulesme, natural son to Henry the second. His widow died in great obscurity, some years afterwards.

1572. a Hugonot, which he apprehended would prove highly injurious to the interests of the Catholic religion; and uninformed of the dark designs concealed under this alliance; still refused and delayed the necessary dispensation. With a view, if possible, altogether to defeat it, he even suggested to the young king of Portugal, the celebrated and unfortunate Sebastian, to demand Margaret's hand; while at the same time he dispatched the Cardinal Alexandrin, as his Nuncio into France, to press the acceptance of the last mentioned proposal. Charles excused himself from complying with the Pontiff's request, as having previously engaged his honor to the prince of Navarre: but he enjoined the legate to assure the holy Father of his filial obedience; and tenderly pressing his hands, added with warmth, "Ah! if I were enabled to explain myself more clearly\*!"

Gregory

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\* De Thou, who minutely relates the efforts and expostulations made by the Legate, in order to induce Charles to retract his intention of giving the princess Margaret, his sister, in marriage to the prince of Navarre;

Gregory the thirteenth, who succeeded Pius the fifth in the papal see, having granted the dispensation so long withheld, a day was

1572.  
May.

varre ; adds, that the Nuncio persisting in his remonstrances on this point, the king replied, “ Je ne puis “ pas, Monsieur le Cardinal, m’expliquer avec vous ; “ mais, soyez persuadé que le Pape approuvera bientot “ le mariage, qu’il condamne aujourd’hui.” Jérôme Catena, who wrote the life of Pope Pius the fifth, relates, in addition to this anecdote, that Charles having taken off a diamond ring of great value from his finger, presented it to the Cardinal ; at the same time saying, “ Receive this pledge of the promise which I give you, “ not to defer the execution of my resolutions against “ the heretics.” The legate declined the acceptance of the ring, but assured his majesty, that “ his word “ was the most precious pledge, which he could give “ to the sovereign Pontiff.”

Davila allows that Charles made many ambiguous declarations of his design to the legate, promising affirmatively, that “ all should terminate to the satisfaction of the Pope, and the benefit of the Catholic religion ;” but says, that every effort to pacify or satisfy the Nuncio, was ineffectual. He relates the story of the ring, tho’ not exactly as De Thou has done ; and asserts, that the Cardinal refused the king’s present.—Mezerai only mentions in general terms, the dark and mysterious assurances made by Charles to the Cardinal, intimating his intention to satisfy the Pope, and to punish his Calvinist subjects.

1572. fixed for the nuptials. In order to be present at her son's marriage, Jane d'Albret June 5. repaired to Paris, accompanied by the princes of Navarre and Condé. But, while she was engaged in preparations for the approaching ceremony, a malignant fever with which she June 10. was attacked, put an end to her life, after five days illness. The multitude, always disposed to attribute the death of eminent persons to violent causes, supposed that poison had been used for the purpose. A perfumer, named René, who had followed the queen-mother from Florence, of which place he was a native, has been accused as the author of this crime, which it is pretended that he even avowed, as a meritorious act. Some perfumed gloves, purchased by the queen of Navarre from this person, were said to have been the medium thro' which the poison was conveyed; and Catherine of Medicis was believed to be an accomplice in the transaction: but these suspicions, on an impartial consideration of every circumstance, ought to be rejected. The physician and surgeon by whom her body was opened, who were both Hugonots, found no appearances to justify such

such a conjecture: on the contrary, they declared her to have died of an abscess in her breast; and there is every reason to give credit to their deposition\*.

Coligny,

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\* It must however be confessed, that Davila asserts in the most express terms, that the queen of Navarre was poisoned.—“The first blow of so great a tempest,” says he, “fell upon Jane, whom the king and his mother thought fit to take off by poison; administered, *as it was reported*, in the trimming of a pair of gloves; but in a manner so imperceptible, and in so nice a proportion, that after having worn them for some time, she was seized with a violent fever, which put an end to her life in four days.—The Hugonots instantly took the alarm, and began to suspect some unfair play; but, in order to free their minds from these apprehensions, the king, knowing that the poison had left no traces except in her brain, ordered her body to be publicly opened. The vitals and intestines being sound and untainted, the head was left untouched, under pretence of respect; and the surgeons then declared that she had died a natural death, caused by a fever.” Notwithstanding this positive testimony of so great an historian as Davila, it may be justly questioned, whether there are any poisons of so subtle a nature, as only to affect the brain exclusively; and to cause death, without leaving any symptoms on the body, of their mortal tendency,

1572. Coligny, still irresolute, dreading Catherine's and Charles's treachery, and rendered more

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De Thou seems to discredit the suspicion of the queen of Navarre's death having been accelerated by unnatural means. He says that she died of a fever, at the age of forty-three years, and some months ; that reports of poison were spread abroad ; and René, a Milanese perfumer, was accused as the person who had administered it ; but that her body having been opened, no marks of violence were discovered, and that an abscess had formed itself in her left side.

Mezerai has strengthened the contrary opinion, by having said that the two persons who opened the queen's body, did not touch her head, where it was supposed the poison had left traces too visible. D'Aubigné, who was a violent Hugonot, seems to make no question of her having been taken off by poison, or similar means.—Voltaire, on the contrary, has taken considerable pains to refute these assertions. “ *La Chronologie Novennaire*” expressly declares, that Caillard, her physician, and Desnœuds, her surgeon, *did* dissect her brain ; which they found in a sound state.

It appears that the queen, during her whole life, had been subject to violent head-achs, attended with an itching ; and she expressly requested, that attempts might be made to ascertain the cause of this complaint, with the intention of relieving her children, if they should be attacked with a similar disorder.—Her desire was complied with ; and the surgeons discovered only some

more distrustful by their caresses, long delayed his appearance at court. Instead of repairing to Paris, he again retired to his castle of Chatillon. New artifices were there- 1572.

some little vesicles full of water, between the brain and the membrane inclosing it, which they declared to have been the cause of her malady.—Catherine of Medicis needs no supposititious crimes to blacken her character: unhappily she committed too many, from which it is impossible to justify her.

Davila allows Jane to have been a great and accomplished princess; he celebrates her courage, capacity, chastity, and magnificence; adding, “That she would “have been worthy of immortal praise, if she had “not presumed, without sufficient learning, to ex- “plore the profoundest mysteries of divinity, and had “not pertinaciously adhered to the errors of Calvin.”—D’Aubigné says that “she had nothing of a woman “about her, except her sex; a manly mind, an ele- “vated capacity, a magnanimity and fortitude of soul, “proof against all the storms of adversity.”

De Thou concurs in these eulogiums on her capacity and grandeur of mind: he says, that she ordered her body to be interred in the tomb of her father, Henry d’Albret, without any funeral pomp; that she recommended to her son Henry, to persevere in the doctrines of the Reformation; to love the princes of Condé and Conti, as his brothers; and above all, to maintain the strictest union between them and Coligny.

fore

1562. fore employed to allure him from his retreat, and the commencement of hostilities against Philip the second in the Netherlands was permitted by the government, as the last and strongest confirmation of the king's resolution to remain true to his past engagements. Vanquished by this artifice, which seemed to pledge his sovereign to immediate hostilities with the Spaniards, the Admiral yielded against his better reason ; and arrived at Paris, accompanied by a prodigious number of the Huguenot nobility, who were soon afterwards followed by the young king of Navarre.

The nuptials of Henry, prince of Condé, with Mary of Cleves, sister to the Duchess of Guise, having been meanwhile solemnized at the castle of Blandi, near Melun ; those of his cousin, the king of Navarre, were fixed to be celebrated at Paris, in the ensuing month. Every testimony of the most cordial friendship was studiously redoubled towards the Calvinist nobles, as well as their leader, and every endeavor was used to dissipate their alarms and suspicions.

August. Notwithstanding so many external demonstrations of amity and affection on the part of

of Charles, the inhabitants of Rochelle dispatched repeated messengers, to implore Coligny not to rely on the word of a king violent in his temper to a degree of fury ; and still less to confide in the promises of the queen-mother, their irreconcilable and mortal enemy. Conscious of the danger, he nevertheless remained immovable in his determination to abide the issue ; and with magnanimous composure replied to the remonstrances made on the subject, that he would rather suffer himself to be dragged thro' the streets of Paris, than renew the horrors of a fourth civil war, or consent to plunge his exhausted country into new calamities\*. The

Marechal

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\* Davila asserts, that the Admiral did not slight the solicitations repeatedly made to him to quit the court, from any feelings of a public or patriotic nature ; but that, elated with the honors shewn him, and intoxicated with his good fortune, he declared, that Charles and his council neither wished nor dared to attempt any thing against him and his adherents. It is however much more natural, as well as pleasing, to think that Coligny was influenced by better motives. The other French historians attribute such to him ; and we know that

Davila,

1572.

1572. Marechal de Montmorenci, either more clear-sighted or more cautious, having obtained Charles's permission to retire to his castle of Chantilly, under pretence of indisposition; by that artifice saved both himself and all his family from the destruction intended for them by Catherine.

Aug. 18. The marriage of the king of Navarre with the princess Margaret, which the Hugonots considered as the bond of political union between them and the Catholics, was at length solemnized at the church of "Notre Dame"

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Davila, tho' one of the greatest writers of modern times, yet may not only be regarded as partial to Catherine of Medicis; but, scarcely ever accounts for any action, or supposes it to have proceeded, from disinterested and generous principles.

He relates an extraordinary anecdote, to prove the suspicions entertained among the Hugonots, relative to the king's sincerity. Langoiran, one of them, distrusting the appearance of affairs, determined at length to retire from Paris.—Coligny, when he came to take leave of him, asked Langoiran, "Why he would not remain?" "Because," answered he, "I see that you are "too much caressed; and I prefer rather saving myself with fools, than perishing with those who are too wise."

in Paris\*. The young queen, who was in the full bloom of her charms, had just completed her twentieth year. In her are said to have been united almost all the great qualities and virtues, with all the defects and vices, charac-

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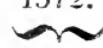
1572.

\* Davila enumerates with great exactness, every circumstance attending these inauspicious nuptials. The Cardinal of Bourbon, uncle to the Bridegroom, performed the marriage ceremony, in presence of the whole court, accompanied with a royal magnificence. But, Davila expressly declares, that when the Princess Margaret was asked, whether she would take the king of Navarre for her husband? she did not answer a word. The king her brother having, however, with his own hand compelled her to bow her head, this act was interpreted as a consent on the part of the princess; tho' she always continued to assert, that to be deprived of the Duke of Guise, to whom she had engaged her promise, and to be united to his most inveterate enemy, were things to which her mind could never be reconciled. The young king of Navarre submitted notwithstanding, with a good grace, to all the marks of alienation visible in the conduct of his bride. The entertainments given by the court on this occasion, lasted three days, and were more splendid than any ever previously exhibited at the nuptials of a princess of France. It is scarcely conceivable or credible, that only six days elapsed between the marriage of Charles's sister to the king of Navarre, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

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1572. teristic of the family of Valois, from which she sprung. The beauty of her person, captivating in the highest degree, inspired with passion the coldest bosoms. Her complexion was clear and animated, her hair of the finest black, and her eyes were equally full of fire and languor. Her look, voluptuous and tender, indicated a disposition framed for pleasure; while full of grace in all her movements, and possessing, like her mother Catherine, the art of disposing every ornament of dress with consummate taste, she announced the elevation of her rank the instant that she appeared.

Possessing talents equal to those which distinguished the first Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, sister of Francis the first; like that princess, she was celebrated by all the poets of her time, with the most flattering encomiums. Addressing her rather as a deity, than as a mortal, they bestowed on her the epithets of "Venus Urania," and "Celestis." Her munificence, her passion for fame, her protection of letters, her vanity, and her unbounded love of pleasure; were striking features of the character of her grandfather, Francis the first. Courteous and affable

ble in her manners, like her father Henry the second, she was, like him, of a temper yielding, flexible, and attached to favorites. 1572. 

Capable of conducting the greatest affairs of government, but, perpetually the sport of her passions, she may be said to have only emerged by paroxysms from pleasure, to which she again returned, from an incapacity of resisting its allurements. Mingling devotion with gallantry, and connecting the fervors of religious enthusiasm with the excesses of dissipation ; she appeared, one while a penitent, stretched at the foot of the altar, bewailing her past transgressions : at another, a voluptuary, devoted to all the refinements of sensual enjoyment.

An unstudied eloquence, and a happy facility of expression, distinguished her in an eminent degree ; but, borne away by impetuous feelings of every kind, her very virtues were carried to an extreme, and her vices were not always concealed under the veil of decorum. Enslaved by constitution, more than by passion, and criminal from weakness, rather than from intention ; if superiority of talents could form the least apology for female error, it would

1572. would be in the person of Margaret, queen of Navarre\*.

The entertainments and demonstrations of joy, which succeeded to the marriage of the king of Navarre, were continued during three days ; but in the midst of this scene of fes-

\* Margaret was born on the 14th of May, 1552. Brantome has exhausted all the powers of panegyric in his delineation of her character. The praises which he bestows on her virtue, might as well have been omitted ; but, the encomiums which he pays to her beauty and understanding, she certainly merited. The assemblage of charms, accomplishments, and winning qualities which she possessed, rendered her almost irresistible. She sung and played on the lute with exquisite skill ; and in dancing, it was admitted that no lady of the court was her equal, whether in the serious, or the lively kind. Her person possessed a thousand graces, all which Brantome enumerates ; but it is her bosom, on which he principally dwells with uncommon pleasure. “ Car jamais,” says he, “ n’en fut “ veue une si belle, ni si blanche, si pleine, ni si “ charnue, qu’elle montroit ; et si descouverte, que la “ plupart des courtisans en mouroient : voire les “ dames, que j’ai veues aucunes de ses plus confi- “ dentes et privées, avec sa licence, la baiser par un “ grand ravissement.” This passage certainly tends to convey no faint idea of the dissolute and libertine manners of the court of Catherine of Medicis.

tivity, the plan of the projected massacre was <sup>1572.</sup> matured, and the minute circumstances of its future execution were arranged. The intention of Charles himself, and of those zealous Catholics, who were commonly denominated, from the name of their chief, the Guises; extended only to the exclusive destruction of the Hugonots. But, it has been supposed that Catherine, hardened to the commission of crimes, and influenced by motives of ambition or of interest, more than by any zeal for religion; had carried her machinations to a much greater length, and intended to involve the Calvinists, the Montmorencis, and even the Guises themselves, in one common carnage. However incredible this design may appear, it is imputed to her by some of the best French historians; nor is even so atrocious a project altogether incompatible with, or contradictory to the genius of the queen-mother, who was capable of forming and executing schemes of vengeance the most unexampled, when dictated by policy or state necessity.

The assassination of the Admiral, which seems to have been determined on, as a prelude

1572. to the general massacre, preceded it by two days ; and a man named Mourevel, rendered already infamous by the murder of the Seigneur de Mouy, one of the Calvinist leaders, which he had perpetrated, was selected for Coligny's executioner. Having concealed himself therefore in a little chamber of the cloister of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, belonging to one of the canons who had been preceptor to the Duke of Guise ; near which place Coligny usually passed, in his return from the palace of the Louvre to his own house ; he patiently waited for his prey. As the Admiral walked slowly on, employed in the perusal of some papers which he held in his hand ; Mourevel, from a window which looked into the street, levelled a Harquebusse Aug. 22. at him loaded with two balls. One of them fractured the fore-finger of his right-hand ; the other ball lodging in his left arm, near the elbow. The assassin, who fled instantly at another door of the cloister, mounted a horse provided for him by the Duke of Guise, on which he escaped. Coligny, without betraying the least emotion, but turning calmly towards the place from whence came the

the shot, “ Le coup,” said he, “ vient de <sup>1572.</sup> là ;” pointing with his finger to the window. His attendants immediately conveyed him home, where his wounds were dressed\*.

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\* Davila, in his account of this infamous transaction, positively attributes it to the Duke of Guise, who deemed himself justified in attempting to take away the Admiral’s life by the same means, which he conceived this latter had formerly used to assassinate Francis, his father, at the siege of Orleans. Davila likewise expressly declares, that “ the Duke of Guise had received the king’s commission to take away Coligny’s life, as a blow preparatory to the general destruction of the Calvinists.”

“ Mourevel,” says Davila, “ having shut himself up in a little lower room of a house near the Louvre, belonging to the Duke of Guise’s family ; and having covered the window, which had iron bars, with an old tattered cloak, waited with great secrecy and patience, for a convenient opportunity. On the third day he executed his commission, as the Admiral was walking slowly along, followed by his servants. One of the balls took off the fore-finger of Coligny’s right hand ; the second tore the flesh from his left elbow, and broke the bone. The doors of the house were immediately burst open, and all the apartments were searched in vain ; they found only a little boy, Mourevel having already escaped by the gate St. Antoine.”

1572. The king, who was playing at tennis in the court of the Louvre, when this news was brought

De Thou likewise declares, that the Duke of Guise acted with the king's consent and privity, in the attempt to cause the Admiral to be assassinated by Mourevel. His relation of this whole transaction coincides with that given by Davila, in all the leading circumstances. "Coligny, after coming from the council "on Friday, the 22d of Augnst," says De Thou, "accompanied the king, who went to play at tennis "with the Duke of Guise and Teligni. Having regarded the game as a spectator for some time, the Admiral quitted the place, and returned home on foot, walking slowly; and occupied in the perusal of a memorial which he had just received. As he passed before the house of Pierre de Villemur, who had been preceptor to the Duke of Guise, Mourevel from a window shot him with two balls; of which one broke the fore-finger of his right hand, and the other wounded him severely near the left elbow; Guerchy, and Sorbieres des Pruneaux, being on each side of him. Totally unmoved by the accident, Coligny instantly pointed to the place from whence came the shot, and dispatched two of his adherents, Clermont de Piles, and Francois de Monins, to inform Charles of this extraordinary act of perfidy and violence. Then causing his arm to be bound up, he continued his return home on foot, supported by his servants. Only a lacquey, a maid servant, and a Harquebusse were found on breaking open the doors

brought him, feigning the most furious indignation, threw down his racket on the ground, and instantly left the place. With loud imprecations, he denounced vengeance on the miscreant who had attempted the Admiral's life, and named judges immediately for the purpose of bringing him to trial and punishment\*. Coligny having signified his wish

to

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“ doors of the house, Mourevel having already made  
“ his escape.”

Mezerai differs little, if at all, from the two before-mentioned historians; but he seems to impute more extended and flagitious schemes of destruction to the queen-mother, than he does to Charles, or to the family of Guise.

\* At the news of Coligny's accident, says De Thou, Charles, who was playing at tennis, threw his racket on the ground, with all the marks of agitation and distress, exclaiming, “ N'aurai-je jamais de repos? Quoi! “ toujours de nouveaux troubles!” He instantly quitted the place, with looks of indignation, the Duke of Guise retiring likewise by another door. When the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, came to visit Coligny, he said to them, “ Is this, then, that “ reconciliation of which the king was guarantee?” —Meanwhile it became indispensable to amputate the finger which had been broken by the ball, as a mortification had begun to manifest itself in the part.

1572.

1572.  to communicate some important matters to his majesty in private, Charles even went in person to visit him on the afternoon of the same day, accompanied by the queen-mother, his brother the Duke of Anjou, and several of the nobility. About the Admiral's bed were ranged the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and all the Hugonot chiefs or adherents. Charles carried his dissimulation on this occasion, to a point of consummate hypocrisy;

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Ambrose Paré, the king's surgeon, performed the operation without delay; but, unfortunately, owing to the want of proper instruments, he was necessitated to make use of a pair of bad scissars, and could not take off the wounded finger in less than three several attempts. Coligny, notwithstanding, betrayed no emotion, nor let the slightest complaint escape him, either during the amputation, or when the wound in his left arm was dressed.

Davila mentions the circumstance of the king's having loudly protested that he would revenge so daring an assassination, committed at the very gate of his own palace; but, he confesses that all this resentment and indignation was merely feigned. The precaution which Charles afterwards used, of commanding all the gates of the capital except two to be shut, under pretence of stopping Mourevel's flight, Davila owns, was done only to prevent the escape of the Hugonots.

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and after a general discourse, entertained Coligny near half an hour in private conversation. He affected to approve, and promised to comply with the Admiral's advice, of attacking the Spaniards in the Low Countries; he exhausted every conciliatory art, in order to efface the unfavorable impressions made upon Coligny's mind; and proceeded so far at this interview, that Catherine herself taking the alarm, demanded of her son with earnestness, what advice the Admiral had given him; to which the king replied, swearing, as was his custom, that Coligny had counselled him to reign alone, and to be no longer governed by others\*.

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\* When Charles entered the Admiral's apartment, he said with all the appearances of concern and sympathy, “*Mon Père, la blessure est pour vous, et la douleur pour moi; mais vous serez vengé d'une maladie si terrible, qu'on s'en souviendra éternellement.*”—This is De Thou's account; who, however adds, that it is uncertain whether the king and Coligny had any private conversation; or whether Catherine of Medicis, who feared the effect which the suggestions of the Admiral might produce upon her son's mind, did not prevent their conversing together apart. When Coligny pressed the king to declare war against Philip the second, and to aid the revolted

1572. All this affected concern could not however diminish the alarm of the Hugonot party, nor dissipate

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Flemings in the Netherlands, Charles artfully broke off the discourse, by affecting an apprehension lest the Admiral's health should suffer from any animated remonstrances, in his present state of body. At his departure, he expressed a desire to see the balls with which the Admiral had been wounded, and which were of copper.—The Count de Retz, under pretence of more effectually protecting Coligny against any possible insurrection, or effects of popular violence, proposed to transport him to the palace of the Louvre. Charles approved of this expedient, which would have put the Admiral more perfectly and completely in his power: but the surgeons declared that it would be dangerous, and probably fatal, to attempt his removal.

Davila says, that the king, accompanied by his mother and the Duke of Anjou, after a hasty dinner, went immediately to visit the Admiral; who urgently requested his majesty's permission to retire from Paris, a city hostile and ill-affected to him; desiring leave to cause himself to be transported to his own castle of Chatillon. Charles upbraided and remonstrated with him, on his want of confidence in the royal protection; opposed such a journey as dangerous to his health, and reiterated his assurances of regard and affection. The physicians concurring in opinion, that any attempt to move him might be fatal, Coligny making a virtue of necessity, and seeing how impossible it was to effect

dissipate their apprehensions. The king of Navarre and the prince of Condé having waited on Charles, requested his permission to leave Paris, in which they considered themselves as no longer safe. It was with difficulty that they could be restrained by any entreaties from executing their intention, tho' Charles and the queen-mother, with solemn and repeated denunciations of exemplary vengeance on the assassin, besought them not to quit the capital. The Calvinist nobles called for instant punishment on Mourevel ; and Clermont de Piles, one of them, had the imprudence to enter the palace of the Louvre, at the head of four hundred gentlemen, threatening to avenge the assassination of Coligny.

This last violent, as well as imprudent step, accelerated the massacre, the queen-mother

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effect his retreat, acquiesced in and submitted to the king's request ; recommended himself to his majesty's protection, and demanded justice for the late atrocious attempt upon his life.—Charles and Catherine gave him every assurance of amity ; and having peculiarly recommended the care of his personal safety to the Duke of Anjou, as governor of Paris, they returned to the palace of the Louvre.

having

1572. having persuaded her son that he would become himself the victim of his own irresolution ; as his only security lay in preventing the Calvinists, by decisive and speedy measures. Many consultations were held among the Hugonot leaders, respecting the conduct necessary to be pursued in circumstances so critical. John de Ferrieres, Vidame of Chartres, one of their Chiefs, strongly urged a retreat, and asserted that it was still practicable, before the people of the metropolis were armed : but Coligny's extreme reluctance to rekindle a civil war, made him determine rather to die, than to leave the capital ; and his son-in-law, Teligni, strengthened, with all his influence, this magnanimous sentiment.

Compelled nevertheless, by the many symptoms which he observed of the approaching and imminent danger, the Vidame renewed his solicitations ; and he insisted on them with more earnestness, as the Admiral seemed able to support the fatigue of a removal. A gentleman who had been present at this council, and who betrayed the secrets of his party, carried immediate intimation of their debates and intentions to the palace of

of the Tuilleries, where Charles had already 1572. assembled his secret council in his mother's apartment\*.

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\* Davila, after relating the repeated attempts made by the Vidame of Chartres, to induce Coligny to retire to Chatillon, and to quit a city in which his life was not secure for a moment; adds, that the Vidame's expostulations and arguments *had* prevailed on the Hugonot chiefs to follow his advice. Teligni maintained that he could procure the king's permission for this purpose; while the other leaders offered, in case of its being refused, to carry off the Admiral by open force. Davila allows that there was treachery in the Hugonot councils, tho' he does not name the traitors; and asserts, that the court having received intelligence thro' the accustomed channel, of their determination to leave Paris, for the purpose of renewing the civil war, instantly came to a decisive resolution to anticipate such a retreat, by commencing the massacre.

De Thou, tho' he agrees with Davila in his account of the reiterated efforts made by the Vidame of Chartres, to prevail on the Admiral to remove from Paris; yet maintains that he never could carry his point, as the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and Teligni, all persisted to oppose an act, which must be an outrage to the king, who had given them so many marks of affection and regard. He names Bayancourt de Bouchavannes, as the person who was suspected to have betrayed the Hugonots, by revealing all their intentions.

1572. The apprehension of Coligny's effecting his escape, which must have involved the court in new and deeper embarrassment; strengthened by the opinion of the Marechal de Tavannes, his mortal and inveterate enemy, who loudly advised a total extermination of the Hugonots; at length prevailed on the king, and obtained his reluctant consent. It is said, that he long hesitated on the measure, and shuddered at its awful consequences: but, being finally overcome by the reiterated remonstrances of those about him, he exclaimed with his usual imprecations, "Eh " bien ! puisque il le faut, je ne veux pas " qu'il en reste un seul qui me le puisse re- " procher!"

In order not to allow time for reflexions,

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tentions to Charles, and to Catherine of Medicis.—Mezerai, who coincides with De Thou, imputes to the repugnance of Coligny, and to the unsuspecting good faith of Teligni, the rejection of the Vidame of Chartres's advice. He adds, that a gentleman who had been present at the deliberations held in the Admiral's apartment, carried information of every thing which had been there transacted, to the palace of the Tuilleries, where Charles had assembled his secret cabinet; and that upon this gentleman's deposition, it was finally resolved to commence the massacre.

which

which might have led to a change in Charles's 1572. determination, the completion of the design was appointed for the same night: the conduct of it was committed to the Duke of Guise, as being animated with a peculiar detestation towards the Admiral, whom he considered as his father's assassin; and the signal was agreed to be made by the striking of the great bell of the palace, on which they should instantly begin the massacre.

As the moment however approached, Charles's terrors and irresolution likewise increased. Some principles of remaining compunction, some sentiments of humanity and virtue, which all Catherine's maxims and exhortations had not been able totally to destroy, still maintained a conflict in his bosom. His mind, torn by the agitation of contending passions, affected and disordered his body. Cold sweats stood upon his forehead, and his whole frame trembled, as if under the attack of an ague. He paused upon the very threshold of the enterprize, while the slaughter of his Hugonot subjects rose before his imagination in all its horror. Catherine exerted every endeavor to support his resolution, and to stifle

1572. stifle his better feelings. With infinite difficulty she at length forced from him a precise command to commence the massacre : having obtained it, but still dreading its recall, she hastened the signal more than an hour, and gave it by the bell of the church of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois\*.

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\* "At midnight," says d'Aubigné, "and at the moment when the massacre was to begin, Catherine, who feared some change in the king, entered his apartment, where were assembled the Dukes of Guise and of Nevers, Birague, keeper of the seals, Tavaannes, and the Marechal de Retz, whom Henry, Duke of Anjou, had conducted thither. The king was in great emotion and uncertainty; but the queen-mother, among other arguments which she used in order to encourage him, said, 'Vaut il pas mieux dechirer ces membres pourris, que le sein de l'Eglise, Epouse de notre seigneur?' She finished by a passage taken from the Italian sermons of the bishop of Bitonto, 'Che pieta lor ser crudele; che crudelta lor ser pietosa.'"

The Duke of Guise, as De Thou assures us, was not present at the council, in which the immediate commission of the massacre was determined ; but, received his orders and instructions from the king himself, on the evening of that night, to assemble the guards, and to make all the necessary preparations. In consequence of the royal command, the Duke disposed

When Charles heard the signal, he was 1572.  
seized with new remorse, which was increased Aug. 24,  
by

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posed every circumstance, having particularly enjoined that the Catholics should wear about their left arm, a white scarf; together with a cross of the same color in their hats. Candles, or lights, were likewise recommended to be placed in all the windows; in order at once to facilitate the projected destruction of the Hugonots, and to enable the Catholics more easily to recognize each other, in such a scene of horror and confusion.

De Thou describes the irresolution and fluctuations of mind in the king, previous to the commencement of the massacre. Catherine, adds he, seeing her son turn pale, and a cold sweat appear upon his forehead, reproached him with want of courage—"Quoi!" said she, "vous n'osez vous défaire de gens, qui ont si peu menagé votre autorité, et votre personne?" Charles catching fire at this contemptuous reflexion, and piqued at his mother's insinuation of his want of courage, gave orders instantly to begin the massacre: but Catherine, fearful that as his resentment abated, he might retract the declaration, anticipated the signal, which was to have been made only an hour before day-break, and caused it to be given immediately.

Mezerai, who coincides in almost every particular with De Thou, delineates in very affecting colors, the agitations and distress of the young king, before his mother with difficulty forced from him a precise order for the commencement of the massacre.

1572. by the report of some pistols discharged in the street. Overcome with emotion, he sent instantly to command the leaders not to put the design into execution till further orders: but it was then too late. The work was already begun; and the messengers brought back word that the people, become furious, could no longer be restrained, or withheld from exercising their vengeance on the Hugonots\*.

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Davila has chosen to be totally silent on all this part of the history of the night of St. Bartholemew, tho' minute in his narration of many other circumstances attending that unprecedented act of perfidy and blood.

\* After the first signal given by Catherine of Medicis, says De Thou, a tumult having immediately begun; the Hugonots who were lodged in the vicinity of the Louvre, and who were awakened by the noise in the streets, anxiously inquired what was the occasion of the lights in all the windows, as well as the reason of the people being armed. They were answered, that it was done on account of a diversion which was to be exhibited for the entertainment of the queens; and curiosity prompting them to advance towards the Louvre, they were immediately cut to pieces by the guards, who were drawn up before the palace. Catherine, anxious to prevent the possibility of her son's retreat, and dreading a change in his resolutions, upon the information which she received of some blood being spilt, went instantly

It is unnecessary minutely to describe all the <sup>1572.</sup> horrors of that night, the remembrance of which is perpetuated by their very atrocity, and from the commemoration of which the historian recoils. Some particulars of it may nevertheless be expected; peculiarly those which accompanied Coligny's end, so long considered as the support of the Hugonot religion and party.

The Admiral, it appears, had been long retired to rest, when the noise of the assassins compelled him to rise; and apprehending immediately the nature of their intentions, he calmly prepared, as became himself, for death. A German gentleman, who was in the service of the Duke of Guise, named Besme, followed by a number of others, first burst open the door, and entering his chamber, advanced towards

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instantly to Charles's apartment; who, terrified at the news of the massacre being begun, had just sent orders to suspend its further prosecution. The queen-mother having assured him, that "it was too late to revoke his intention, and that neither the people nor the soldiery could be any longer restrained;" Charles, driven forward, took his decisive resolution, and caused the signal to be made by the bell of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois.

1572: the Admiral, holding a long rapier in his hand. Coligny looking at him with an unaltered countenance, and incapable of resistance, from the late wounds which he had received, only said, “ Young man, respect these grey hairs, “ nor stain them with blood !” Besme hesitating a moment, then plunged the weapon into his bosom ; and the others immediately threw out his body into the court, where it was impatiently expected by the Duke of Guise. He contemplated it in silence, as is asserted, without offering it any injury : but Henry, Count d'Angoulesme, Grand Prior of France, natural son of Henry the second, who accompanied the Duke, having wiped the face with a handkerchief, and recognized the Admiral's features, which were covered with blood, gave the corpse a kick ; adding with a barbarous joy to those about him—“ Cou-“ rage ! my friends ! we have begun well : “ let us finish in the same manner\* !”

Teligni,

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\* Davila has related minutely, tho' with some little variation, this affecting story. “ At the hour ap-“ pointed,” says he, “ the Duke of Guise, his uncle “ the Duke of Aumale, and Henry d'Angoulesme, the “ king's

Teligai, a youth of the most interesting person, and the most engaging manners, who had

1572.

“ king’s natural brother, attended by about three hundred followers, repaired to the Admiral’s house. “ They were there joined by a company of Catholic soldiers, commanded by Cosseins, whom the Duke of Anjou had stationed for that purpose, under arms, “ with their matches lighted. The gate of the court, “ which was only guarded by a few of the king of Navarre’s halberdiers, they instantly forced; putting “ to death both them, and all the servants whom they “ met, without mercy. The nobles waited below, “ while La Besme, a native of Lorrain, and an immediate dependant of the Duke of Guise, went up “ to Coligny’s apartment. He was accompanied by Achille Petrucci, a Siennese gentleman retained by the Duke; by Colonel Sarlebous, and the other soldiers.

“ The Admiral hearing a disturbance, got up; and “ kneeling down, supported himself against the bed, “ when one of his servants, named Cornason, burst into the room. Coligny asked him, ‘ What occasioned the noise?’ To which Cornason hastily replied, ‘ My lord, God calls us to him;’ and instantly ran out at another door. The assassins entered a moment afterwards, and advanced towards Coligny. Addressing himself to La Besme, who had drawn his sword, the Admiral said, ‘ Young man, you ought to reverence these grey hairs; but do what

1572. had married Coligny's daughter, was massacred on that night at the same time, having attempted

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“ you think proper: my life can only be shortened  
“ a very little.” He had scarcely spoken these words,  
“ when La Besme plunged the sword into his breast,  
“ and the others dispatched him with their daggers.  
“ They then threw his body down into the court, from  
“ whence it was dragged into a stable.”

De Thou's account differs in no material point whatever from that of Davila, tho' he mentiens some circumstances omitted by the last historian. “ Cosseins,” says de Thou, “ having united himself to the Duke of Guise and his followers, on their arrival at the Admiral's house, ordered Labonne, who kept the keys, to open the door in the king's name. He obeyed without the slightest suspicion of treachery, and was instantly stabbed. The persons who were with him, astonished and terrified at this unexpected assassination, fled; and gaining the staircase, endeavored to stop the further entrance of the russians, by barricading the passage with chairs and tables. Meanwhile Coligny, hearing a noise, imagined that it was caused by some tumult; but persisting to repose himself on the honor and good faith of the king, he still conceived his person secure under the guard which had been assigned for his protection; 'till hearing a Harquebusse fired in the court, he got out of bed. While he was preparing himself for every event, the door of the staircase was burst open, and the assassins

“ sins

attempted to save himself on the roof of the house, where he was discovered, and stabbed 1572.  
by

“ sins mounted to his apartment. Cosseins, d’Attins, “ Corberon, Cardillac, Sarlabeuz, Petrucci, and a “ German named Besme, who had been a servant in “ the Duke of Guise’s house, entered his chamber, all “ armed with euirasses. They forced the door, and “ Besme advancing first, with a sword in his hand, “ said to the Admiral, ‘ Est-ce toi qui es Coligny?’ “ ‘ C’est moi même,’ answered he, with a serene air; “ and shewing Besme his grey hairs, ‘ Jeune homme,’ “ added he, ‘ tu devrois respecter mon age; mais “ achieve. Tu ne peux abreger ma vie que de fort peu “ de jours.’ Besme made no reply, but plunged his “ sword into the Admiral’s body; and drawing it out, “ cut him several times across the face. It is re- “ ported,” continues De Thou, “ that Coligny ex- “ claimed, on receiving the wound from Besme, ‘ Au “ moins si je perissois par la main d’un homme de “ cœur; et non par celle d’un miserable valet!’

“ The Duke of Guise, who during this unmanly “ assassination, had remained in the court below, with “ the nobility who attended him, demanded if the “ business was finished; and being answered in the “ affirmative, ‘ Monsieur d’Angoulesme,’ said he, ‘ ne “ le croira point, s’il ne voit le traître a ses pieds.’ “ The body of the Admiral was immediately thrown “ down from a window; and the Count d’Angoulesme “ having with a piece of linen wiped off the blood from “ the face, and recognized the features, disgraced him-

1572. by the assassins. But, the fate of the Count de la Rochefoucault was attended with circumstances, which excite peculiar pity, blended with indignation. He had passed the whole evening preceding the massacre, engaged with the king at play ; and Charles, touched with pity at the fate of a nobleman so amiable, for whom

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“ self so far as to kick the corpse, and to treat it with  
“ other indignities.”

Brantome, in his “ Life of Coligny,” relates, with scarcely any material variation, all the principal circumstances enumerated by De Thou and Davila. He says, that “ Sarlabons, governor of Havre, boasted to “ have put the Admiral to death : but, that beyond a “ doubt, Besme gave the mortal blow ; as a reward for “ which act of blood, the Duke of Guise, whose page “ he had been, married him to the natural daughter “ of the Cardinal of Lorrain. Besme, vain of the ex- “ ploit which he had performed, and in expectation of “ receiving from Philip the second, a reward propor- “ tionate to its magnitude and importance, went into “ Spain two years afterwards, where he was treated by “ Philip with great civility. That monarch conferred “ many favors on him ; but returning into France, “ G<sup>ui</sup>, the just avenger of crimes,” says Brantome, “ either blinded him, or his malignant destiny con- “ ducted him into the hands of the Hugonots ; who “ made him prisoner as he passed thro’ the province “ of Guyenne, between Barbesieux and Chateauneuf.

“ Besme

whom he entertained a personal affection, would willingly have rescued him from the general destruction. With that intention he ordered la Rochefoucault to remain all night in his privy chamber ; but the Count, apprehending that the king only meant to divert himself at his expence, by some puerile tricks or pastimes, refused, and retired to his own apartment in the Louvre. “ I see,” said Charles, “ it is the will of God that he should ‘ perish !’ When the officer who was sent to destroy him, knocked at the door, he opened it himself, believing it to have been the king ; and seeing several persons masked, enter the room, he advanced gaily to meet them, but was instantly dispatched with their daggers\*.

The

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“ Besme was carried immediately to the castle of  
 “ Bouteville, where the Sieur de Bertauville com-  
 “ manded ; who detained him a considerable time, and  
 “ at length, on pretence of his having attempted to  
 “ effect his escape, caused him to be killed as a victim  
 “ to the Manes of Coligny.” When we reflect on the  
 fate of Robert Stuart, put to death at Jarnac, can we  
 wonder at the retaliation ?

\* Even Brantome severely arraigns and condemns the conduct of Charles, in permitting the Count de la

1572. The Count de Guerchy, who lodged in the same house with Coligny, wrapping his cloak about his arm, died sword-in-hand ; and killed several of his murderers before he fell himself. Soubise, covered with wounds, after a long and gallant defence, was at last put to death under the queen-mother's win-

Rochefoucault to be put to death, at the massacre of St. Bartholomew. He relates the circumstances attending it, with more minute accuracy than De Thou : “ When Chicot, the king’s buffoon, and his brother, the captain Raymond,” says Brantome, “ came in the morning, to break open the door of La Rochefoucault’s apartment, he immediately rose and dressed himself, imagining it to be Charles himself, who came to play some youthful frolic. The assassins continuing to attempt to force the door, he cried out (still conceiving that he addressed his discourse to the king), ‘ Ce sont des jeux du feu roy, votre pere ; vous ne m’y attraperez pas ; car je suis tout chaussé et vestu.’ In this fatal and unsuspecting security, he ordered the door to be opened, and was instantly murdered. Charles, in excuse for having permitted a nobleman on whom he had recently bestowed so many marks of personal affection, to be basely assassinated ; said, that he had two or three times in vain requested La Rochefoucault to remain in his own chamber, during that fatal night ;—an apology which serves only to heighten the atrocity of the action !”

dows ;

dows; where, however incredible, the ladies of the court, with shameless and unfeeling curiosity, went to view his naked corpse, disfigured and bloody. The bodies of the slaughtered Hugonots were collected, and thrown in heaps before the palace of the Louvre, to satiate the vengeance of Catherine of Medicis, who derived a gratification from this inhuman spectacle. The Marechal de Tavannes, one of the most violent in the execution of the massacre, ran through the streets of Paris, crying, “ Let blood ! let blood ! Bleeding is equally wholesome in the month of August, as in the month of May !” Even the king himself, forgetful of the protection which he owed to his people, was personally aiding on that night, in the slaughter of his Huguenot subjects. It is confidently asserted, that he fired on them with a long Harquebusse from the windows of his palace, and endeavored to kill the fugitives who attempted to escape from the “ Fauxbourg St. Germain.”

The Admiral’s body, which was treated with indignities that dishonor human nature, underwent all the fury of an enraged and barbarous populace. An Italian having first

severed

1572. severed his head from the trunk, carried it to Catherine of Medicis; after which the people cut off the hands, leaving the disfigured remains upon a dunghill. In the afternoon they took the body up again, dragged it during three days in the dirt, then along the banks of the Seine, and lastly, carried it to the village of Montfauçon; where it was hung upon a gibbet by the feet, suspended by an iron chain, and a fire lighted under it, by which it was scorched, without being consumed. In this condition, which might have extinguished all further sentiments of vengeance, the king, with several of his courtiers, went to survey it; and as the corpse was become exceedingly offensive, some of them turning away their heads with disgust, "The body of a dead enemy," said Charles, imitating the sentiment attributed to Vitellius, "smells always well!"—The remains of Coligny, after so many indignities, having been at length taken down privately from the gibbet, in a very dark night, by order of the Marechal de Montmorenci, were interred with the utmost privacy, in the chapel of the castle of Chantilly.

Many accidents or causes nevertheless, conducted, notwithstanding the rigorous orders issued

issued for an indiscriminate slaughter, to rescue numbers of the Hugonots. Even the king himself excepted two individuals from the common destruction. The first of these persons was his surgeon, the celebrated Ambrose Paré, whose superior and uncommon professional skill proved the chief instrument of his preservation; Charles having commanded him to remain in his own apartment during that night. The other person was his nurse, to whom he was warmly attached, and to whom he scarcely ever refused any request. The Duke of Guise himself preserved from death more than a hundred, with intent to attach them to his service, whom he concealed during the violence of the massacre, in his own palace.

The Montmorencis, all which family had been enrolled on the list, and devoted by Catherine of Medicis to death, were secured by the absence of the Marechal, their eldest brother, who, it was feared, might severely revenge the slaughter of his relations. The tears and entreaties of Mademoiselle de Chateauneuf, prevailed on her lover, the Duke of Anjou, to spare the Marechal de Cossé, who was nearly related to her. Biron, grandmaster

1572. master of the artillery, afterwards so distinguished under the reign of Henry the fourth, having pointed several Culverines over the gate of the arsenal, where he commanded ; stopped in some measure the fury of the Catholics, and afforded an asylum to many of his friends or adherents.

The Count de Montgomeri, and the Vis-dame of Chartres, with near a hundred Hugonot gentlemen, who were lodged to the south of the river Seine, in the “ Fauxbourg “ St. Germain,” escaped on horseback, half naked. But, being pursued by the Duke of Guise, and overtaken at break of day, many of them were cut off; only the two chiefs and about ten of their followers arriving safe on the coast of Normandy, from whence they passed over into England. Henry, king of Navarre, and his cousin the prince of Condé, were exempted from the general carnage, tho' not without violent debates in the council. Charles having ordered them both to be conducted into his presence, commanded them, with menaces and imprecations, to abjure their religion, on pain of instant death. The king of Navarre obeyed; but the prince of

of Condé, more firm, obstinately refusing to <sup>1572.</sup> renounce his religious principles, Charles, at length, almost frantic with indignation, said to him in three words, “ Mort, Messe, ou Bastile!” This threat proved effectual; and the young prince, terrified into submission, wisely complied with the necessity of his situation\*.

During

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\* Davila declares, that the Duke of Guise strenuously endeavored to have the two princes of Bourbon included in the massacre; but, that Charles and the queen-mother thinking it an action so detestable, to imbrue their hands in the blood of their own relations, that no reasons of state could in any degree justify or authorize it, peremptorily refused their consent. He adds, that the king was peculiarly inclined to adopt this resolution, from personal affection, and regard to the many virtues of Henry, king of Navarre.

De Thou says, that the council was unanimous in their opinion that the king of Navarre, so recently allied to Charles by a marriage with his own sister, could not be put to death in the very arms of his bride, and in the palace of his brother-in-law, without reflecting indelible infamy on the perpetrators of such a deed, to the latest posterity. But he adds, that there was more difficulty relative to saving the prince of Condé, towards whom the court bore an hereditary hatred. The entreaties of the Duke of Nevers, who had married the princess of Condé's sister, added to his own near alliance

1572. During a whole week the massacre did not cease, tho' its extreme fury lasted only for the

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ance with the blood royal, prevailed however over his enemies, and determined Charles to except him from the general destruction.

Davila and De Thou perfectly coincide in their account of the menaces made use of by Charles, in order to compel the two princes of Bourbon to renounce and abjure their religious opinions. The latter of these historians asserts, that about a fortnight after the massacre, on the 9th of September, the king, irritated by the inflexibility of the prince of Condé, called for arms to be brought to him; and determined at the head of his guards to exterminate the surviving Hugonots, of whom the prince himself should be the first victim. The advice and efforts of the young queen his wife, who besought him not to proceed to an act of such vengeance, without asking the opinion of his council, induced Charles nevertheless to dismiss his guards, and to desist from the prosecution of this barbarous purpose. But, on the following day, having sent for the prince, he said to Henry, with a tone of voice and manner the most indignant, “*Messe, mort, ou prison perpétuelle!*” “*A Dieu ne plaise;*” answered Condé, “*que je choisisse la première!* Pour les deux autres, “*c'est à votre majesté à décider.* Je prie la Providence de vouloir la guider dans la résolution qu'elle prendra.” This humble and submissive, but firm and courageous reply, having in some degree disarmed the

the two first days ; and every enormity which 1572.  
zeal, revenge, or cruelty, are capable of in-  
fluencing mankind to commit, stain the re-  
gisters of this period. More than five thou-  
sand persons of all ranks are supposed to  
have perished by various kinds of death ; the  
Seine was loaded with floating carcasses ; and  
Charles beheld with satisfaction from the win-  
dows of the Louvre, a spectacle, from which  
he ought to have averted his eyes with hor-  
ror. A butcher, who entered the palace  
during the heat of the massacre, is said to  
have boasted to his sovereign, laying bare his  
bloody arm, that he had himself dispatched  
a hundred and fifty Hugonots\*.

Far

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the violence of Charles, induced him to determine on a milder treatment. The prince of Condé, yielding soon afterwards to motives of terror, more than of conviction, abjured the principles of the Reformation, and received absolution in the Pope's name, from his uncle, the Cardinal of Bourbon ; as did his two younger brothers, the prince of Conti, and the Count de Soissons.

\* The account which Margaret, queen of Navarre, has given in her Memoirs, of the night of St. Bartholomew, is not only authentic, but, too interesting in its own nature to be omitted. On the evening preceding the

1572. Far from appearing to manifest any tokens of remorse, at the contemplation of such complicated

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the massacre, Margaret was at the queen her mother's "Coucher," who ordered her to retire.—"As I made my courtesy," says she, "my sister of Lorrain," (Claude, princess of France, married to the Duke of Lorrain), "took hold of my arm, and stopping me, burst into tears; 'My God,' said she, 'sister, do not go!' which frightened me extremely. The queen my mother perceived it, and calling my sister to her, reprimanded her very severely, forbidding her to say any thing to me. I saw plainly that they differed, but could not hear their words; and the queen commanded me a second time rudely to go to bed. My sister, melting into tears, bade me good night, without daring to say any thing else; and I went out, all trembling and terrified, without being able to imagine what I had to fear."

The king of Navarre was already in bed, and Margaret found him surrounded by thirty or forty of the Huguenot lords, who remained the whole night in conversation, upon the subject of the Admiral's late wound. At break of day Henry rose, intending to play at tennis, and fully determined, as soon as Charles the ninth should be awake, to demand justice on the assassins of Coligny. Margaret then yielding to fatigue, and having ordered the door of her apartment to be shut, soon fell asleep; but scarcely had an hour elapsed, when a person came to the door, and knocking violently at it with his

plicated and extensive destruction, the queen-mother is said to have gazed with satisfaction on Coligny's head when presented to her; and to have sent it to Rome, as a present the most acceptable to the reigning Pope.

Some

1572.

his hands and feet, cried out, “ Navarre! Navarre!” The nurse, who lay in her apartment, rose immediately to open it, apprehending it to be Henry, her husband. A gentleman, named Tersan, covered with wounds, and pursued by four archers, instantly burst in, threw himself on her bed, and clasping her in his arms, besought her to save his life. He had received two wounds, one in the neck from a sword, and the other in his arm from a halberd. The archers, notwithstanding, pursued the object of their fury even into the princess's chamber, and attempted to tear him from the asylum to which he had fled for refuge; but as Tersan held the young queen closely embraced, it was impossible to separate them, till their cries brought to the spot Nançay, captain of the guards. Margaret says, that in spite of all the horror of the spectacle, Nançay could not help laughing at the situation of Tersan; then commanding the archers to leave the room, he granted Tersan's life to the princess's entreaties, who caused him to lie in her own cabinet, and ordered his wounds to be dressed, till his cure was complete.

The young queen, frightened into agonies at this horrid sight, put on a night-gown, and ran to her sister the Duchess of Lorrain's chamber, where she arrived, more dead than alive. As she entered the antichamber,

1572. Some weeks after the massacre had ceased,  
Oct. 28. she accompanied the king her son, to witness  
the execution of Briquemaut, a Hugonot  
gentleman of seventy-two years old, and of  
Cavagnes, a master of the court of requests,  
who had escaped in the general slaughter ;  
but who being afterwards discovered, were  
condemned to suffer capital punishment. By  
an excess of barbarity which it is difficult to  
credit, the king was desirous of enjoying the  
sight of their last agonies. The night having  
closed in before they were conducted to the  
gibbet, he commanded torches to be held up  
to the faces of the criminals, with a view of  
attentively remarking the effects which the  
approach of death produced upon their fea-  
tures. In perusing these facts, we may con-

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a gentleman named Bourse, was stabbed with a halberd, at two steps from her. Overcome with this second barbarity, she fainted into the arms of Nançay, and she declares that she was sprinkled all over with the blood of these miserable victims. Nançay informed her of the king of Navarre's safety, who was at that time in Charles's closet. She went thither : and throwing herself at her brother's and the queen-mother's feet, implored, and at length procured with difficulty, the pardon of Miossans and Armagnac, two Hugonots in her husband's service,

ceive.

ceive ourselves transported from the capital of a civilized and Christian country, to the worst periods of the history of Rome, under the most depraved, or most flagitious of the family of the Cæsars.

As if the insults and indignities shewn to Coligny, before, as well as subsequent to his assassination, were not considered by the government to be sufficient for expiating the double crime of heresy and rebellion; new acts of outrage were permitted towards his memory. An effigy representing his person, was drawn upon a sledge to the place at which Briquemaut and Cavagnes had been executed, where it was suspended on a gallows: nor was it omitted to put a tooth-pick into the mouth of the figure, in order to render the resemblance complete; Coligny, when alive, usually appearing with one on all occasions. Gaspard de la Chatre, Count de Nançay, had been previously dispatched by the court, to the castle of Chatillon, to seize on the Admiral's wife and children, as well as on those of d'Andelot his brother. But intelligence of the massacre having reached them, Coligny's widow and his eldest son, together with his daughter who had been

1572. married to 'Teligni; accompanied by the Count de Laval, son to d'Andelot, escaped, and arrived safe at Geneva. Not thinking themselves even in that asylum, secure from the vengeance of Catherine of Medicis, they removed into the territories of the Canton of Berne, where they remained concealed. The younger children, who were all conducted to Paris, notwithstanding their youth and innocence, fell victims to the sanguinary policy of the government. The example exhibited by the sovereign and the capital, was too faithfully followed thro' the various provinces of the French monarchy, into all which similar orders had been dispatched. Some few individuals nevertheless, superior to the age in which they lived, and whose names posterity will for ever cherish; refusing to comply with so barbarous a mandate, tho' signed by the king's hand, preserved the Hugonots from outrage or violence in their respective governments\*.

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\* In the cities of Lyons, Orleans, Rouen, Bourges, Angers, and Toulouse, the royal orders for massacring the protestants, were most implicitly obeyed. In Provence, Claude de Savoye, Count de Tende, absolutely refused

In Charles's perplexed and contradictory conduct subsequent to the massacre, we plainly trace his own reluctant consciousness of the infamy, as well as atrocity of that transaction. Unwilling to take wholly upon himself the load of so awful a responsibility, he first accused the Duke of Guise, as the Sept. 1572.

refused to pay any obedience to so detestable a command ; " for which," says Davila, " he was secretly dispatched soon afterwards at Avignon ; and, as it was commonly believed, by a commission from the king."—St. Herem, governor of Auvergne, and De Gordes, who commanded in the province of Dauphiné, likewise declined compliance with the orders sent to them, for the extermination of the Calvinists. To the honor of the Catholic religion, the Bishop of Lizieux protected them from injury in his diocese ; as did the Marechal de Matignon, in the city of Alençon. But, above all, the answer sent by the Viscount d'Ortez to Charles, merits never to be forgotten. It was to this effect : " Sire, I have read the letter, enjoining a massacre of the Hugonots, to the inhabitants of Bayonne. Your majesty has many faithfully devoted subjects in this city, but not one executioner." Mezerai estimates the number of Hugonots put to death in the various provinces, at twenty-five thousand ; De Thou supposes them to have amounted to thirty thousand ; and Davila even carries the computation to more than forty thousand persons, of all ages and conditions.

1572. sole author of it, in his circular letters transmitted thro' the kingdom. But, afterwards, aware that such an assertion could only aggravate the guilt, as well as increase the shame attending on the act, he thought proper to avow himself as the perpetrator of it. Satiated with the sacrifice of so many Hugonots, the court did not even conceive it possible that they could rise again in arms, without leaders, and destitute of every apparent means of support; but in this confidence Charles was deceived. Oppressed as they were by superior numbers, the zeal for their religion, which this cruel persecution had heightened and confirmed, rendered them nevertheless invincible. Instead of tamely submitting, or throwing themselves on the mercy of the crown, they stood on their defence in several provinces, erected anew the standard of revolt, and even resisted with success the efforts of their victorious enemies.

1573. Rochelle, which was become the central point, and the grand asylum of Calvinism, having shut its gates against the royal forces, and preparing to defend itself in case of a Feb. siege; the Duke of Anjou was sent at the head

head of a numerous army to invest it, carrying with him to the attack, almost all the young nobility of France. Francis, Duke of Alençon, youngest of the sons of Henry the second; together with the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, who were dragged to the attack of Rochelle, as hostages; were all detained in the royal camp. It is even pretended that Catherine had formed a project for the dissolution of her daughter Margaret's inauspicious marriage; but, the princess herself opposing this intention, refused to consent to its execution\*.

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\* Margaret, in her Memoirs, has given a very curious relation of her mother's measures for procuring this divorce. Catherine demanding of her daughter, whether Henry had consummated the nuptials on the bridal night; asked her, as she asserts, “ Si son mari “ étoit homme ? parceque si cela n'étoit pas, ce seroit “ un moyen de la demarier.” The answer which Margaret pretends that she made to this extraordinary question, is singular; peculiarly so, if we consider the dissolute character and manners attributed to the princess herself. She assured Catherine, with all the appearance of simplicity and innocence, that “ she be-“ sought her majesty to believe, that she did not un-“ derstand the import of what was asked her; but that

1573. There are few examples in modern history, of a siege carried on with greater vigor, or sustained with more determined obstinacy, March. than that of Rochelle. The Duke of Anjou in vain blockaded it on every side: his reiterated and bloody attacks, in which vast numbers of his soldiers fell, neither terrified the

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“ she would remain with the husband whom they had given her; *Me doutant bien*,” adds she, “ que la separation n’avoit pour but, que la perte de mon mari.”—If we may believe this anecdote, it appears difficult to assign any other motive for the conduct of the queen of Navarre, than that of humanity, as she never entertained any personal affection for Henry, during the whole course of her life; unless we suppose, that a reluctance to lay down the title of *Queen*, might have influenced her in the rejection of such a proposition.

That the marriage was consummated, is a point beyond all doubt, since Henry the fourth himself avowed it, tho’ the confession was injurious to his objects and interests. Many years afterwards, when his divorce was solicited in the court of Rome, he was informed, that he had only to imitate the example set him by Louis the twelfth, of denying the consummation of his nuptials. “ No,” said Henry, “ it is an assertion which I cannot make; nor is it credible, that a man of my constitution, and a woman of the princess’s complexion, could possibly fail to have completed the nuptial rites.”

inhabi-

inhabitants, nor disposed them to capitulate; 1573. while, on the other hand, the political intrigues, dissensions, and opposite factions, with which his camp was agitated, augmented the obstacles to his success.

Francis, Duke of Alençon, now nineteen years of age, whose character began to unfold itself, aimed and aspired to form a new party in the distracted state. His person, destitute of grace or elegance, corresponded with the formation of his mind. Turbulent and restless, he beheld with envy and discontent his brother Henry's military reputation. Anxious to obtain political consideration, by whatever means, he united himself with the Hugonots and the king of Navarre, to revenge the death of Coligny. Irresolute, capricious, and incapable of firmness on great occasions, he always deserted his friends when in distress: void of faith and honor, no reliance could be reposed on his promises or engagements. His elevated rank, as youngest brother of the king, together with his personal courage, which was undisputed, counterbalanced notwithstanding, in some measure, these numerous defects of nature and of disposition; nor does he seem

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1573. to have been altogether destitute of generous and better principles or inclinations, which sometimes manifested themselves, tho' they did not systematically influence or govern his conduct\*.

His

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\* Francis, Duke of Alençon, the fifth and youngest son of Henry the second, who was born on the 18th of March, 1554, at his baptism received the name of Hercules; which his mother Catherine afterwards changed, from a superstitious expectation of prolonging his life by that alteration. It would appear that she never loved him with maternal affection; frequently calling him, "Mon fils égaré." Having received in his childhood, some impressions favorable to the Reformed religion, from the persons who had the charge of his education, he had connected himself very closely with Coligny, previous to the massacre of St. Bartholomew; with the intentions of perpetrating which he was totally unacquainted, being excluded from any participation in his mother's councils. The Duke of Alençon appearing deeply affected at Coligny's death, which he bewailed with tears; Catherine, desirous of effacing these sentiments from her son's mind, caused a part of the Admiral's journal, which had been brought her, to be read to him; in which he had strongly advised Charles the ninth not to confer upon his brothers too much authority, nor to assign them large establishments. "Observe," said she, "what counsel your good friend gives the king!"

"I know

His practices and political connexion with the king of Navarre, which were soon ~~dis~~<sup>1573.</sup> vulged,

“ I know not,” replied the Duke, “ whether he loved me much; but I am convinced that none except a man most faithful to his majesty, and most zealous for the state, would be the author of such advice.”

Davila attributes this affected attachment of the Duke of Alençon to the memory of Coligny, entirely to the envy and jealousy which he felt at his brother Henry’s power and great reputation. That historian has depicted the Duke of Alençon under the most unfavorable colors, as deficient in any talents or qualities worthy of esteem, and as incapable of suffering a comparison with the Duke of Anjou.—“ *La propria capa-“ cita, e l’habilita di lui,*” says Davila, “ era stimato “ molto inferiore, e d’ingegno, & di valore, al Duca “ d’Angio.” In another place, speaking of that prince, he thus delineates his character: “ *Francesco, Duca d’Alansone, terzo fratello del ré, il quale non solo era giovane d’anni, & per difetto dell’ età privo d’esperienza; ma per natura, ancora dotato di poca capacita d’ingegno, e d’animo così volubile, e così gonfio, che si vedeva molto più inclinato a consigli torbidi e precipitosi, che a maniera di vita prudente, e moderata.*”—De Thou has drawn his portrait in a much more flattering manner, tho’ admitting his defects and weaknesses. “ *Vif, eloquent, courageux, affable, et magnifique; mais ambitieux, inquiet, et changeant.*”—Mezerai, on the other hand, speaks in

1573. vulged, spread a great alarm at court. Charles, irritated at his brother's conduct, and apprehensive of new commotions breaking out, sent him a strict prohibition from quitting the camp on any pretence. He at the same time ordered the Duke of Anjou to accelerate by every possible effort the reduction of Rochelle, on account of the urgent necessity which he had of the return of the troops, for the protection of his own person and authority.

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in terms of disapprobation, mingled with contempt, of his qualities both of body and of mind.—“ Prince aimable et inquiet,” says he, “ méprisé pour sa petite taille, et sa mauvaise mine ; capable d’embrasser toutes sortes d’entreprises sans raison, et de les abandonner aussi légerement.”

Tho' most of the French historians describe his person as mean, and almost deformed, yet De Thou contradicts that assertion. “ Il étoit petit, mais bien fait. Sa phisionomie étoit agréable, quoiqu'il eut le teint fort brun, et le visage gâté par la petite verole.” These are De Thou's words.—Montfaucon, in his “ Monumens de la Monarchie Françoise,” has preserved two portraits of Francis, Duke of Alençon; one of which is only a bust; the other, a whole length, in complete armour. In neither of these, does he appear to be either deformed in his figure, or deficient in expression of countenance, and personal elegance.

Already

Already the king began to be sensible of 1573.  
the delusion into which he had been plunged,  
by his mother's pernicious counsels. The  
horror necessarily excited by his reflections on  
the massacre of St. Bartholomew, remained  
indelibly impressed on his imagination ; his  
accustomed gaiety and complacency no longer  
appeared in his countenance ; while in its  
place a fixed and melancholy gloom took pos-  
session of his mind. Perceiving the ignominy  
and detestation with which his unparalleled  
barbarity and perfidy had marked him to the  
latest posterity ; he could not dissemble his  
resentment of Catherine's advice, which had  
induced him thus to violate the primary duties  
of religion and humanity. The agitation of  
his thoughts, and the reproaches of his con-  
science, irritating the natural violence of his  
temper, carried him to excesses of rage, which  
were equally injurious to himself, and to those  
about him. His health, undermined by his  
reflections, already appeared to sink under  
the load of self-condemnation. The queen-  
mother having about this time reproved him  
for his furious passion with some of his ser-  
vants, and observing, that it would become  
him

1573. him better to exert that anger against the rebels, who caused the destruction of so many of his faithful and loyal subjects before Rochelle ; he replied, “ Madame, qui en est “ cause que vous ? Par la mort.....vous “ êtes cause de tout !”

While these symptoms of animosity between Charles and his mother began to manifest themselves, and while Henry exhausted his army in ineffectual attempts against Rochelle ; the intelligence arrived at Paris, of this latter prince’s election to the crown of Poland. It was an event, which, tho’ originally solicited, was however no longer desired, on the part of Catherine, and her favorite son. The Duke of Anjou, who necessarily considered himself as immediate heir to the crown of France, while his brother had no male issue by the queen ; and who had from his infancy been accustomed to the dissipations of the most magnificent court then existing ; regarded with a sort of horror, the idea of going to reign over a barbarous people, so far removed from his native country, at the other extremity of Europe. Impressed with these sentiments, he had, in conjunction with his mother,

mother, employed by every secret method, to counteract the success of the negotiation which was meant to place him on the Polish throne. But, Montluc, bishop of Valence, who had been sent into Poland, in order to gain the suffrages of the Diet; regarding his sovereign's orders and his own honor, more than Catherine's or Henry's concealed wishes; acted with so much vigor and address at the election, on the decease of Sigismund Augustus, that the Duke of Anjou was chosen king. This event forming an ostensible and honorable pretext for withdrawing his troops, broken, as well as diminished by an unsuccessful siege, of so long duration, deputies were appointed for the purpose on either side. They soon concluded a general pacification, June 25. not only for the city of Rochelle, but for the whole kingdom; tho' on terms less favorable to the Hugonots, than any of the three preceding treaties of peace.

The Duke of Anjou having terminated this important negotiation, which promised once more to restore tranquillity to France; embarked on board the royal gallies, conducting with him his brother the Duke of Alençon, the

1573. the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé.  
~~~ Landing at Nantes, he remounted the river Loire to Clery; at which place having performed a vow which he had made, he proceeded to Orleans, where he was received with every mark of solemnity and magnificence. The Polish ambassadors, twelve in number, made their entry into the capital soon afterwards, at which city Henry had previously arrived. The decree which elected him to fill the vacant throne, enclosed in a silver box, sealed with a hundred and ten seals of Prelates, Palatines, and Castellans, was then publicly read; Charles, habited in his royal robes, and accompanied by all the grandees of the court, being present at this ceremony. When Te Deum had been sung, the king rising from his seat, embraced his brother, the new sovereign. Henry next saluted the Duke of Alençon, and the king of Navarre; after which all the noblemen of the court paid him the customary respects and congratulations. Catherine of Medicis, however internally concerned she was at the event, did not the less display all her characteristic magnificence on this occasion, in the splendid diversions and

and entertainments with which she affected 1573.
to celebrate her son's accession to the throne
of Poland*.

Charles, on the other hand, who had embraced the firm resolution of reigning alone, Sept. and of adopting measures more salutary and beneficent to his people, than those which he had hitherto pursued ; received with extreme satisfaction the intelligence of his brother's

* Brantome has given us a minute description of Catherine's banquets and amusements, exhibited on the arrival of the Polish ambassadors. Sixteen ladies of the court, representing the sixteen provinces of France, dressed with the most perfect propriety, in habits emblematical of their ideal characters, formed a dance, which was performed in the palace of the Tuilleries. As far as we are able to judge, scarcely any of the superb Carousals of Louis the fourteenth, were superior in elegance, in brilliancy, or in effect, to those of Catherine of Medieis, which were exhibited nearly a century earlier in point of time.

Margaret, queen of Navarre, formed the animating soul of these diversions. Her beauty, gaiety, and above all, that air peculiar to her, which breathed and inspired desire, rendered her the most fascinating princess in the world. Lasco, one of the noblemen composing the Polish embassy, when he was presented to her, was so overcome with her attractions, that he burst into the most passionate exclamations of rapture and astonishment, at the sight of so charming a woman.

1573. election to a distant crown. Having long perceived the error which his mother's counsels had induced him to commit, of entrusting to Henry so extensive an authority, civil, as well as military ; he now saw himself on the point of being released from a rival, who became every year more obnoxious to him. Actuated by these wishes, he hastened his brother's departure with visible anxiety and impatience ; but the king of Poland protracted his stay under a thousand pretences. Catherine's maternal partiality towards him ; the charms of a luxurious court ; the possession of power scarcely inferior to that exercised by the king himself ; added to the not improbable expectation of the crown of France as not remote ; all these motives contributed to detain him. In addition to them, a passion still more tyrannical rendered him deaf to the voice of ambition, no less than to the suggestions of reason. He was ardently attached to the princess of Condé ; and his heart, naturally susceptible of the impressions of dissolute pleasure, endeavored in vain to extricate itself from the powerful effect of her charms.

Mary of Cleves, married to Henry, prince
of

of Conde, who was at this time only seventeen years of age, possessed attractions of person the most irresistible. Her mind, improved and elegant, corresponded with her external figure; while her heart, corrupted by the contagious examples of vice which she saw on every side around her, had not been able to resist so accomplished a lover, as the hero of Jarnac and of Moncontour. A sense of honor, and a regard to the nuptial vow which she had so recently made, long nevertheless supported her against seduction; but Henry, master of all the arts which such a design naturally inspires and dictates, employed the most effectual methods to obtain the gratification of his wishes. His sister, the queen of Navarre, lent her assistance in obtaining for him the possession of his mistress: even the Duke of Guise, forgetting his natural haughtiness, and united to the king of Poland by the closest ties of friendship, did not hesitate to aid Henry with all his eloquence. His uncle, the Cardinal of Lorrain, tho' a priest and an ecclesiastic, was the first, in defiance equally of decency and of morals, to persuade him to undertake this humiliat-
1573.

1573. ing office, and to procure his own sister-in-law for Henry. Overcome by so importunate a suit, the princess of Condé yielded at length: the first decisive interview between herself and the king of Poland, took place at the palace of the Louvre; where she was delivered up to him as a sort of victim, by Margaret of Valois and the Duke of Guise*.

* Neither Davila nor De Thou have descended to the narration of this interesting story, which they perhaps considered as below the dignity of history: but Mezerai expressly assigns the attachment of the king of Poland for the princess of Condé, as the most insurmountable obstacle to his departure from France. He confirms likewise the part which the Duke of Guise acted in it; and adds, that the Duke offered Henry fifty thousand men, to protect him from the resentment of Charles, if he should think proper to persist in refusing to quit Paris, in order to take possession of his new dominions.—Desportes, the celebrated poet, who accompanied the king of Poland to Cracow, has given an account of this amour, and has minutely described the interview of the two lovers, in a poem called “Cleophon.” Henry is there named Eurilas; the princess of Condé, Olympia; and Margaret of Valois, Fleur de Lys. Bussi d’Amboise, the queen of Navarre’s lover, is supposed to be depicted under the character of Niurus; as are the Duke of Guise, and his mistress, Madame de Sauve, under the names of Floridant and Camilla.

Amidst

Amidst the pleasures to which the two ^{1573.} lovers at first abandoned themselves, Henry lost sight of every other object or incitement to action. He seemed even to have forgotten all the duties imposed on him by his new dignity. A crown, which could only be purchased by a removal from France and from the princess of Condé, did not in any degree appear to him worthy of the sacrifice. But a necessity more imperious, as well as severe, soon compelled him to hasten his departure. Charles growing hourly more and more impatient at his delays, at length informed the queen-mother, with his usual vehemence, that he would not permit of the king of Poland's longer stay; adding, that one or the other of them must instantly quit the kingdom.

Alarmed at so peremptory an intimation, Henry began his preparations, ordered all his equipage and attendants to be ready, but still delayed his final departure. The Duke of Guise, who flattered him with the hopes of Charles's death as near at hand, offered, if he was determined to stay in France, to protect him against the king's resentment with fifty thousand forces. Three days hav-

1573. ing elapsed in this state of uncertainty, Charles, irritated at length almost to fury, and persuaded that Catherine chiefly prevented the king of Poland's journey; perhaps from some treasonable and dangerous intentions which she meditated in his favor; no longer observed any measures with his mother. He ordered the door of his apartment to be shut against her, and began to project some more effectual designs against herself and her favorite son.

These unequivocal marks of Charles's displeasure, which terrified Catherine, induced her to implore the king of Poland to delay no longer his departure, if he regarded his own personal safety. Henry consenting Sept. 28. th therefore with extreme reluctance, prepared to commence his journey. The whole court accompanied him; Charles himself, more from motives of prudence, than from sentiments of affection, being among the number. He found himself nevertheless, unable to conduct his brother to quite the frontier of France, as he had intended; a slow fever, attended with a violent giddiness in the head, and pains about his heart and stomach, having obliged him to stop

stop at the town of Vitry in Champagne*. 1573.
The queen-mother, the Duke of Alençon,
with

* De Thou, in his account of the illness of Charles the ninth, and the symptoms attending it, not only attributes it to poison; but he expressly names Charles de Gondi de la Tour, great master of the wardrobe, as the person who, in concert with his two brothers, the Marechal de Retz, and the bishop of Paris, was suspected of having executed this detestable project. The family of Gondi, originally Tuscan, who had followed the queen-mother from Florence into France; had been elevated by Charles, at Catherine's suggestion, to the highest dignities and employments. The Marechal de Retz, who had succeeded La Cipierre, in the important charge of governor to the young monarch, had enjoyed the greatest degree of his personal favor and affection. But the king, naturally discerning, had begun to manifest some concern at the profusion of honors which he had heaped on the family, and to repent of his own liberality. In addition to this decrease of his public regard and protection, was joined another more wounding, tho' more private affront, on the part of Charles. He had become deeply sensible to the beauty and attractions of Helena Bon, wife to the Count de la Tour, and had removed her husband from court, in order to facilitate his interviews with the lady. The Count, who suspected their attachment, returning unexpectedly, was too well satisfied by the evidence of his own senses, that all his apprehensions were founded in truth. Charles,

1573. with the king and queen of Navarre, and a great train of the nobility, continued their progress with Henry as far as Blamont in Lorrain, where the separation took place between him and Catherine. She held him long in

instead of endeavoring to mollify the resentment of the Count, menaced him with the severest effects of his indignation, if he presumed to treat his wife with rigor. The story became public; and it was said, that the Duke of Guise, discontented with Charles, instigated and inflamed the Count de la Tour to vengeance. The queen-mother herself was not spared on this occasion; and popular report asserted, that she was neither unacquainted with, nor adverse to the projects, for the king's destruction. Her assurances to the king of Poland at his departure, that "he would not be long absent," increased these suspicions, and induced her enemies to pretend that she was privy to the attempts against Charles's life. Such is De Thou's account of that prince's disorder, and of its cause; the scene of which he lays at the town of Villers Coteretz, between Paris and Vitry in Champagne; to which last place, tho' severely indisposed, he continued his journey, and where he was finally compelled to stop, by more violent attacks of a similar nature.

Davila makes no mention whatever of Charles's illness, during the journey of his brother Henry towards the frontiers; but Mezerai speaks of it in very ambiguous

in her arms, unable to bid him adieu, while 1573.
sighs and tears interrupted her voice. Among
the expressions of consolation which she used,
with a view to diminish the excess of his grief
on this exile from his country ; “ Allez, mon
“ fils ;” said she, “ vous n’y demeurerez pas
“ long tems !” The seeming ambiguity of
this dark prediction ; Charles’s illness, ac-
companied with extraordinary, as well as
alarming symptoms ; the well known and
recent quarrel between the brothers, which
had preceded it ; and the queen-mother’s par-
tiality to the king of Poland ; all these cir-
cumstances gave rise to reports and suspi-
cions, tho’ probably in themselves unjust,
that Charles’s seizure was the effect of poison.

The king’s disorders might perhaps more
reasonably be attributed to natural causes,
than to any other origin ; since we find the
French historians are unanimously agreed,

guous and enigmatical terms. “ A few days,” says
he, “ after the menaces which Charles had used to-
“ wards his mother, he had been seized with a slow,
“ malignant fever, accompanied with a Vertigo, and
“ pains about his heart at every moment.” He insi-
nuates that unnatural means were suspected, but leaves
the point dark and undetermined.

that

1573. that ever since the massacre of Paris, he had betrayed marks of great mental agitation and distress. He had besides impaired his constitution by too violent or too laborious exercises; and his lungs were particularly affected, in consequence of constantly blowing the horn when he went to the chace. Charles was accustomed to play at Tennis, during five or six hours without intermission, which extremely agitated and heated his blood: he became incapable of sleeping except for a very short time, at intervals; and even then his slumbers were restless and disordered. These physical and moral causes, which probably conducted him, tho' slowly, to the grave; might without any sinister interpretation fully explain, and even justify Catherine's assurances to the king of Poland, that his absence from France would not be of long duration*.

Henry

* Brantome says, that Charles never recovered his tranquillity of mind, nor even the exterior appearance of repose, after the massacre of St. Bartholomew. “I saw him,” says Brantome, “on my return from the siege of Rochelle, and found him entirely changed.” —“On ne lui voyoit,” adds he, “plus au visage, ‘cette

Henry meanwhile, accompanied with several of the first nobility of the kingdom, and a train of five hundred gentlemen, having crossed the whole Germanic empire, arrived at Miezrich, the first city of the Polish dominions, in the depth of winter. All the Jan. 25, princes thro' whose territories he passed, endeavored to outvie each other in the honors which they paid to so illustrious a stranger; and he was received at Cracow with every demonstration of national joy, as well as of

“ cette douceur qu'on avoit accoutumé de lui voir.”—Mezerai enumerates the violent exercises to which the king had accustomed himself; “ de courir a la chasse, “ de piquer de grands chevaux, de jouér a la paume “ cinque ou six heures durant, de forger et battre le “ fer a tour de bras.” All these imprudent excesses had naturally thrown his blood into a state of fermentation, highly injurious to his health; and when joined to the uneasy reflections which continually haunted him, contributed to prevent his recovery.—De Thou, who equally admits the effect of the massacre on the king's mind, says, that “ after the day of St. Bartho-“ lomew he slept little, and his slumbers were inter-“ rupted by dreadful dreams; at which times he was “ accustomed to send for musicians, who by airs and “ symphonies procured him some repose.”

publie

1574. public festivity *. His graceful and majestic person, his condescending and courteous manners,

* The king of Poland, after quitting Blamont, passed through the Bishopricks of Spire and Worms, to Heidelberg, the capital of the dominions of the Elector Palatine. That prince, walking, with his royal guest, in a gallery of the palace, which was ornamented with the portraits of illustrious persons, undrew a curtain from before a picture of Coligny ; and pointing to it, said to Henry, “ Among all the French nobility “ whom I have seen, that is the man whom I have “ found most zealous for the glory of his country ; “ and I am not afraid to assert, that the king of “ France has sustained a loss in him, which he never “ can repair.” The king of Poland, who felt the severity of the censure, made no reply.—Continuing his route thro’ Mentz, he stopped during the festival of Christmas, at the abbey of Fulda ; on leaving which he was received by the Landgrave of Hesse, with extraordinary honors. Having passed the river Elbe at Torgau, the Elector of Saxony, who was himself indisposed by sickness, dispatched his son-in-law to conduct the young monarch thro’ the Saxon dominions, at the head of two thousand cavalry ; and on his passing the frontiers, he found an escort of fifteen hundred horse waiting for him, sent by the emperor Maximilian the second. The Duke of Prussia attended him to Francfort on the Oder ; and Henry arriving in the territories of Poland, upon the 25th of January, 1574, the

Bishop

manners, added to his unbounded liberality, ^{1574.} or rather profusion, towards all ranks of people; rendered him in the beginning the idol of his new subjects. But, these external endowments, calculated only to conciliate at first view, and unsupported by any solid or valuable qualities of mind, soon ceased to inspire veneration. Instead of endeavoring to retain the affections of the nobility, he alienated them by his conduct, secluded himself from their view, and sunk into a splenetic inaction.

Disgusted with the barbarous customs and national character of the Poles, he even ceased to be any longer easy of access, or affable in his demeanor towards them, as he had been on his first arrival. Remaining whole days in

Bishop of Cujavia there harangued him, in the name of the Polish senate and the nobility. The king proceeded immediately to Cracow, the capital of his new dominions, where the Count de Retz had previously assisted as his representative, at the Obsequies of the late sovereign, Sigismund Augustus. The senate and nobles advanced to meet him half a league from Cracow, into which city he was received with all the testimonies of public festivity. The anecdote respecting the Elector Palatine, and the portrait of Coligny, is confirmed by Mezerai, and by Brantome, in the strongest manner; as well as by De Thou.

his

1574. his apartment, abandoned to chagrin, and under the greatest uneasiness at not receiving the letters which he expected from France; he passed his time in perusing the billets of the princess of Condé, which he kissed and bathed with tears. She was ever present to his imagination, and maintained her empire over his affections. He wrote letters to her of the fondest attachment, entirely in his own blood, filled with protestations of inviolable fidelity; while Desportes the poet, who attended him to Cracow, continually nourished his passion by Sonnets composed in praise of his mistress. His unmanly dejection of mind was still further increased, by the proposition which the Polish senate made him of marrying Anne Jagellon, sister to the deceased sovereign, Sigismund Augustus; a princess of a disagreeable person, and already advanced in years.

Jan.

It was at least natural to suppose, that the departure of the king of Poland, however painful to himself, would have tended to diffuse tranquillity over the court and kingdom of France: but Charles's reign seemed destined to experience every species of civil commotion and calamity. The Duke of Alençon, perpe-

perpetually forming schemes of ambition, which he afterwards as quickly abandoned from fickleness and irresolution, rekindled the flame of expiring civil war. The religious spirit of Calvinism, springing anew from its ashes, reappeared in every quarter of France ; and unterrified by the late massacre of its followers, animated them to new efforts against the government.

As if Providence, for reasons inscrutable to us, meant to aggravate these national misfortunes, the king's strength began to fail, just as he entered the prime of life, and when he appeared to promise times of more repose. His capacity, naturally clear and discerning, enabled him at length to see the train of errors and crimes, into which his youth had been betrayed ; and all his actions indicated the resolution which he had embraced, to govern by other principles than those which had actuated his past conduct. Applying himself in person to affairs of state, he expressed the most anxious desire to relieve his people from the many calamities, which they had experienced since his accession to the crown. In opposition to the advice of several of his ministers, he discharged them from a third part

1574.

1574. of the taxes ; could only be induced to retain three companies of the regiment of guards about his person ; and ordered the remainder to be immediately disbanded.

Notwithstanding his deep aversion towards the doctrines of Calvinism and the Hugonots, he had nevertheless determined to disgrace, and to banish forever from his councils, the advisers of the late massacre. It was his intention to restore to his parliaments the administration of justice, with which the ancient constitution of France entrusted them ; to repress the dangerous power of the two great houses of Guise and of Montmorenci ; and finally, renouncing his immoderate prosecution of the chace and other dissipations, to dedicate his whole future attention to the more important occupations of a wise and beneficent prince. But, these salutary plans were soon overturned by the progress of his disorder ; and, unable to resist the violence of its attacks, he rapidly approached the end of his life, before he could in any measure atone to the nation for his past misconduct, or expiate his errors.

In the mean time, the Hugonots, whose courage was revived by the Duke of Anjou's removal

removal to a distant part of Europe; and still more by the king's languid state of health, which rendered him unfit for any exertion of personal vigor; appeared again in arms. ^{1574.} La Marche, Noue and Montgomeri, who had escaped the massacre of Paris, and in whom Condé and Coligny, might be in some measure said to survive, re-assembled their numerous adherents. The Duke of Alençon, to whom Charles, by the advice of his mother Catherine, had peremptorily refused the post of Lieutenant-general of the kingdom; incensed at this rejection of his demand, supported the enterprize. Henry, king of Navarre, as well as the prince of Condé, had promised to declare openly in their favor; and many noblemen of the court were secretly disposed to join the insurgents. The Duke of Alençon even entered into a formal engagement to quit the court, and to put himself at their head. But, Chaumont, one of their leaders, who, with a body of cavalry had approached the palace of St. Germain, in order to facilitate his escape, as had been preconcerted; having mistaken the day, and repairing to the place, near a week before the time appointed, the Duke, naturally fickle, and incapable of em-

1574. bracing a decisive resolution, had not the courage to perform his agreement.

La Mole, his principal favorite, conscious that the design could not long remain concealed ; anticipating its discovery, revealed the whole conspiracy to the queen-mother. The court was instantly thrown into disorder : and Catherine having affected a degree of terror which she did not really feel, with intent to render the conspirators greater objects of public hatred ; fled to Paris at midnight in the utmost confusion, followed by her female attendants and courtiers. Charles himself removed on the ensuing day, to the castle of Vincennes, where his brother Francis, and the king of Navarre were likewise conducted ; not indeed as close prisoners, but, accompanied by a guard who carefully watched their motions. On their subsequent examination, which took place in presence of the king and queen-mother, the conduct of the two princes formed a singular contrast. The Duke of Alençon, with the meanest pusillanimity, trembling, avowed his crime, and did not hesitate to betray his adherents : while Henry, answering the interrogatories put to him with firm intrepidity, rather as an injured,

than

than as a guilty person, refused to make any confession injurious to his friends or followers*. 1574.

Charles's

* De Thou has given several very curious and interesting particulars of the defence made by the king of Navarre, when interrogated before Charles and Catherine; which may serve to throw some light upon the conclusion of this disastrous reign, and to evince that there were at least intentions of hastening Charles's death by unnatural means. Henry asserted positively, that he could adduce proofs of designs having been meditated against his own life; and added, that tho' he might have despised the danger which menaced himself, he could not be insensible to that which threatened the king. He declared, that after the departure of the king of Poland, a secret council was held, for the purpose of deliberating on the methods of dispatching Charles; the Catholics desiring his death, in the hope and expectation that his brother Henry, ascending the throne of France, would finish the extirmination of the Protestants. He then complained of the ill usage which he had himself personally sustained from Catherine of Medicis; and particularly, of her having excluded him from the council, and prevented his access to the king. "I have frequently," added he, "spoken to the king of Poland, respecting the bad designs of some turbulent spirits in the court: but I am well persuaded that my frankness displeased him, since at his departure from Blamont, he did not deign to mention me to

1574. ~~April.~~ Charles's disorder, which seemed to have given him some respite during the winter, revived with double violence on the approach of spring. The late treasonable practices of his brother the Duke of Alençon, and those of the king of Navarre, when added to the renewal of the civil war with the Hugonots, affecting him deeply, irritated the other diseases which preyed on his enfeebled constitution. "At least," exclaimed he, in the agony of his mind, "they might have waited for " my death. It is too much thus to dis- " tress me, now that I am debilitated by " illness*!"

Cathe-

" the queen-mother ; tho' he recommended to her all " those who were present, and even many persons who " were absent at that time." Five days afterwards, the king of Navarre repeated the same assertions in the queen-mother's presence, in that of the Cardinal of Bourbon, and of other commissaries appointed to inquire into the conspiracy : he even spoke with more force and warmth upon these points, than he had done on his first examination.

* It was not possible, says Brantôme, to ascertain of what nature was the king's disorder ; so various and uncommon were the symptoms. These are his own words which follow : " Car il lui survint une fièvre " catartique, qui tantôt étoit quarte, tantôt continue : " et

Catherine, ever attentive to her own interests, and foreseeing that probably the king's end could not be very distant, with her usual sagacity began to concert measures for securing to herself the future regency. Her son's declining health, and his incapacity of extending any personal application to affairs of state, having in some degree restored to her the authority of which he had previously begun to deprive her; she exerted it, in order to render herself mistress of those persons, who might otherwise oppose her taking possession of the supreme power, in case of Charles's death.

La Mole, as well as the Count de Coconas, an Italian nobleman, both of them favorites of the duke of Alençon, were in consequence arrested. The former denied every article imputed to his charge, persisting invariably

April
11.

“ et pensoit Monsieur Masille, son premier médecin,
“ qu'il se porteroit de bien en mieux, ainsi que la
“ fièvre diminueroit.” He adds, that the Duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre's collusion, with the rebels, aggravating all the symptoms of his complaint, from that time his majesty grew much worse.—“ Dont
“ on en soupçonna,” adds he, “ quelque poison, en-
“ chantement, et ensorcellement.”

1574. in that assertion to the last moment. But, the Count, flattered with the fallacious hopes of life and of a large reward, being examined in the royal presence, confessed all that he knew, and even accused the Marechals de Montmorenci and de Cossé, as having been accomplices in the late conspiracy. This deposition, tho' probably extorted from Coconas only by the expectation of escaping an ignominious punishment, furnished Catherine with the plausible pretext which she wanted for arresting the two Marechals; who might, she apprehended, in case of Charles's decease, form an impediment to the succession of the king of Poland, the object of her fondest wishes.

A circumstance which very strongly marks the superstition of that age, in which the supposed effects of charms and sorcery were objects of general belief, served to hasten the execution of La Mole and Coconas. A little image, composed of wax, being found in the house of the former, the heart of which was pierced thro' with a needle in many places; it was pretended that this figure represented the king, whom La Mole had thus devoted to death by the force of enchantments. He strenuously

nuously denied the charge, asserting that he had procured it from Cosmo Ruggieri, a Florentine, who having followed the queen-mother into France, professed the art or science of magic. Ruggieri being interrogated in turn, confirmed La Mole's assurances ; declaring that the intention of the amulet was to enable him to gain the affections of a lady, to whom that gentleman had been attached*.

Notwith-

* All the French historians relate this story, which is commemorated in nearly similar terms by De Thou, by Mezerai, and by Davila. The last-mentioned writer speaks of La Mole and of the Count de Coconas, in terms of equal detestation and contempt. “ Boni-“ facio, Signore della Mola,” says he, “ huomo di “ poca levatura, ma ripieno di pensieri misurati e “ vasti ; et Annibale, Conte di Coconas, Bandito Pie-“ montese.” With respect to the figure of wax, found in the possession of La Mole, it formed a characteristic of the age, which was infected to the greatest degree with a belief in magic ; a species of madness that did not terminate till towards the close of the reign of Louis the fourteenth. A priest, named Des Eschèles, who was executed about this time, in the “ Place de Greve,” at Paris, for having had a supposed communication with evil spirits, accused near twelve hundred persons of the same crime. Catherine of Medicis, who was peculiarly credulous on that point, always carried about her person

1574. Notwithstanding this satisfactory defence, La Mole was executed some days afterwards, with the Count de Coconas, in the “Place de Greve” at Paris. Their bodies being quartered, were placed on wheels, and their heads elevated on two poles. La Mole is said to have been beloved by the queen of Navarre; as his accomplice, Coconas, was equally favored by the

cabalistical characters, written on the skin of an infant born dead. Several Talismans and Amulets were found in her cabinet after her death; and it is well known that she consulted an Astrologer, on the fortunes of all her children. Favin, in his history of Navarre, relates a curious anecdote upon this subject. “The queen,” says he, “having early applied to a Magician, to know the destiny of her sons, he made her see in a magic mirror, the number of years that each would reign, by the number of turns which they made. Francis the second, Charles the ninth, and Henry the third, passed successively in review before her: she even saw Henry, Duke of Guise, who disappeared on a sudden; and Henry the fourth, who made twenty-four turns. This prediction and apparition increased her original aversion to the king of Navarre.”—Cosmo Ruggieri, of whom mention has been made, was sent to the gallies; but Catherine soon after liberated him from that state of servitude and punishment, in order to make use of the secrets which she supposed him to possess. He died in high repute at Paris, under Louis the thirteenth’s reign, in 1615.

Duchess

Duchess of Nevers: and however incredible such a fact may appear, it is confidently asserted by many of the contemporary historians, that these two princesses having caused the heads of their lovers to be taken down, on the night after their execution, interred them with their own hands, in the chapel of St. Martin, near Paris*.

The two accused noblemen, Montmorenci and Cossé, either impelled by a just reliance on their own innocence, or from a confidence in their high rank and authority, repaired immediately to court, in order to justify themselves from the supposed treason attributed to

* Mezerai mentions this extraordinary fact; and Henry the fourth, in his Memorial relative to the dissolution of his marriage, presented to pope Clement the eighth, expressly asserts and confirms it, as well as the intrigue by which it was preceded. “ The Duchess of Nevers,” says he, “ being attached to the Count de Coconas, persuaded her friend the queen of Navarre to commence an amour with La Mole, their common confident,” “ pour lui épargner le chagrin de garder les manteaux, pendant qu’ils étoient ensemble.”—“ The connexion was of short duration. The two lovers left their heads upon a scaffold; and their mistresses, having caused them to be taken down, put them in a coach, and buried them in St. Martin’s chapel, below Montmartre.”

them

1574. them by Coconas. But being arrested on their arrival, they were committed by Catherine to the Bastile; and the Parisians furnished with alacrity eight hundred men to prevent their flight or rescue. Orders were likewise issued for the arrest of Henry, prince of Condé, who, as governor of Picardy, resided at Amiens: but he had the good fortune to effect his escape, and quitting that city in disguise, arrived safe at Strasbourg; where having solemnly abjured the Catholic religion, he made a public profession of Calvinism.

In Normandy, the Hugonots being pressed by the Marechal de Matignon, at the head of the royal forces, were almost every where reduced to lay down their arms, and to surren-
May 25. der at discretion. The Count de Montgomeri himself, one of their greatest commanders, being invested in the little town of Domfront, was obliged to capitulate with Matignon. The preservation of his life constituted one of the conditions expressly stipulated; but the queen-mother, who had determined to sacrifice this victim to the memory of her husband, Henry the second; regardless either of the honor of the crown, or of the capitulation, caused Montgomeri to be executed after the death

death of Charles the ninth, previous to the ^{1574.} return of his successor from Poland.

The king, who began to sink rapidly under the pressure of his disorders, which increased every day, long endeavored nevertheless to resist their attacks: but his strength diminishing continually, compelled him at length to take to his bed, at the palace in the wood of Vincennes. Catherine, improving the opportunity which the decay of his intellectual strength afforded her, used every exertion to induce him to invest her with the regency. As long as Charles retained in any degree his usual energy, he persisted invariably to deny her this proof of his confidence; and could only be persuaded to grant her letters, addressed to the governors of the different provinces, which enjoined them, that “during his illness, and in case that it should please God to take him, they should obey his mother, till the return of the king of Poland.”

One of the most striking lessons which history, ancient or modern, can present to mankind, is that of Charles the ninth, cut off in the flower of his age by a disorder very unusual, if not unprecedented; accompanied with many circum-

1574. circumstances strongly calculated to excite horror and compassion. During the two last weeks of his life, nature seemed to make extraordinary efforts for his relief or recovery. He trembled, and all his limbs were contracted by sudden paroxysms ; while his acute pains did not suffer him to enjoy any repose, or to remain scarcely a moment in the same posture. He was even bathed in his own blood, which oozed thro' the pores of his skin, and at all the passages of his body, in great quantity. His constitution, naturally sound and robust, aided by his youth, supported him nevertheless, for some time, against the progress of this cruel and insurmountable disease.

May 27. Three days only before he died, the queen-mother having informed him, with marks of extraordinary satisfaction, that the Count de Montgomeri was taken prisoner by the Marechal de Matignon ; Charles received the intelligence without manifesting any indication of joy, or even change of countenance. “ Quoi ! “ mon fils,” said she, “ ne vous rejouissez vous “ point de la prise de celui qui a tué votre “ pere ? ” — “ I am no longer interested,” answered the expiring prince, “ about that, or “ about

“about any other affair.” Catherine regarding this indifference as the infallible prognostic of his speedy and approaching dissolution, redoubled her exertions to perpetuate her authority after his decease.

On the morning of the day when Charles breathed his last, availing herself of the exhausted condition in which he then lay, she reiterated to him her entreaties to nominate her regent. Having complied with her request, rather as it would appear thro’ weakness, than from choice or inclination, she immediately dispatched other letters into the different parts of the kingdom, announcing the king’s pleasure upon that point. It is nevertheless indisputable, that only a few hours before he expired, Charles gave decided marks of the alienation which he felt towards his mother. The king of Navarre approaching his bed, Charles embraced him many times; and after other demonstrations of confidence and attachment which he manifested towards that prince, said to him, “Je me fie en vous, “ de ma femme, et de ma fille; Je vous les “ recommande, et Dieu vous gardera! Mais “ ne vous fiez pas a—” Catherine, fearing he was about to name herself, interrupted him

with—

1574. with—"Monsieur, ne dites pas cela."—"Je
~~~ " le dois dire," answered the dying monarch,  
" car c'est la vérité."

Perceiving at length that his end approached, he prepared himself for it with perfect composure of mind. Having ordered the Duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre to be conducted into his presence; Birague the Chancellor, Monsieur de Sauve, Secretary of State, the Cardinal of Bourbon, with several others of the great nobility, were likewise admitted. Addressing himself to them with the earnestness of a person about to quit the world, he declared his brother Henry, king of Poland, successor to the crown of France; the Salic law excluding his own child, a daughter, from the throne. He implored the Duke of Alençon not to molest, or attempt to impede his elder brother's entry into the kingdom; and obliged all present to take the oath of allegiance to the absent sovereign, as well as of obedience to Catherine, 'till his arrival.

Charles then commanded the Viscount d'Auchy, captain of the royal guards, to look well to his charge, and to preserve unshaken his loyalty to the king of Poland. He requested  
Poque-

Poquenot, lieutenant of the Swiss guards, to 1574.  
 deliver his dying recommendations to his  
 allies, the thirteen Cantons; and he particu-  
 larly charged the Count de la Tour, master of  
 his wardrobe, to carry his remembrances to his  
 mistress, Mary Touchet, whom he had long  
 loved with great affection. These acts per-  
 formed, he sunk into a state of extreme  
 weakness, and yielded his last breath, about May 30.  
 three o'clock in the afternoon: wanting only  
 twenty-one days to have accomplished his  
 twenty-fourth year\*.

The reports of poison, which had been so  
 frequently and recently circulated, were again  
 renewed with some appearance of reason.

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\* Brantôme, who was in the court, at the time of  
 Charles's death, is very minute in his relation of all the  
 circumstances which attended the last illness of that  
 prince. These are his own words:—“ Il mourut le  
 “ propre jour de la Pentecôte, l'an 1574, trois heures  
 “ après midi, sur le point que les médecins et chirur-  
 “ giens, et tous ceux de la cour, le pensoient se mieux  
 “ porter: car le jour avant il se portoit bien; et nous  
 “ croyions qu'il s'en alloit guery; mais nous donnâmes  
 “ de garde que sur le matin il commença à sentir la  
 “ mort, laquelle il fit très belle, et digne d'un grand  
 “ Roi.”

1574. Catherine of Medicis was even accused by the public voice, of having accelerated her son's death; but from this detestable and improbable crime, she must be acquitted on an impartial examination \*.

Charles

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\* It may be curious, nevertheless, to enter a little on this disquisition, almost all the writers of that period having made mention of the suspicion, tho' they in general exculpate the queen-mother. So abominable an action, if true, would probably have been authenticated, and handed down to us by incontestible evidence. Davila never once even hints at poison; but expressly attributes Charles's death to "an illness occasioned by too violent exercise in running, hunting, "wrestling, and riding the great horse; to all which "recreations he was immoderately attached."—In another place he says, "The king's life was now hastening "fast to its period; he had begun to spit blood some "months before, and being exhausted with a slow, "continued, internal fever, he had entirely lost his "strength."—Davila recounts the particulars of his "calling into his chamber, the princes and great officers of state, previous to his death; and adds, that "Charles having dismissed all present with weighty "and affecting admonitions, still continued to hold his "mother's hand fast in his own, and in that posture "ended the course of his troublesome reign."—The very act in which he expired, seems to indicate filial piety

Charles left by his queen, only one daughter, named Mary-Elizabeth, who survived him

1574.

piety and affection. Even Henry Etienne, a violent disclaimer against Catherine of Medicis, who accuses her of many murders, makes no mention of, nor imputes to her, that of Charles.

Monsieur De Thou hesitates, and leaves the point undecided; yet he rather seems to insinuate poison, as the cause of the king's death, and charges indirectly the queen his mother. "Charles," says he, "embraced Catherine of Medicis tenderly before his decease, and thanked her for the obligations which he owed her; having thus continued his dissimulation to the last moments of his life: for it is certain that his affection for, and confidence in the queen-mother, were considerably diminished. It is even pretended, that he had it in contemplation to send her into Poland, to her beloved son Henry." De Thou asserts likewise, that the Count de Coconas, previous to his execution, had warned the king of attempts which were meditated against his life, from more than one quarter; and La Popeliniere confirms this fact. Henry, king of Navarre, in repeated declarations, accused Catherine either by name, or by implication, of practising against the life of Charles, with intent to place the French crown on the head of the king of Poland. De Thou likewise relates, that on opening the body of Charles, very suspicious appearances were discovered, and that poison was commonly believed to have been the cause;

1574. him about four years. His widow, Elizabeth of Austria, retiring soon afterwards into the dominions of her father, the emperor Maximilian.

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“ *cujus rei, suspicio ut purgaretur, mortui corpus a chirurgiis et medecis apertum est ; in quo livores, ex causa incognita reperti, conceptam opinionem auxerunt, potius quam minuerunt.*” These are the words of that great historian.

Brantome on the other hand, denies this assertion, and positively declares, that no marks of violence or poison were discoverable on the king's body.—“ *Le jour ensuivant, son corps fut ouvert en presence du magistrat ; et n'y ayant été trouvé au dedans, au cune meurtrisseure ny tache, cela osta publiquement l'opinion que l'on avoit de la poison.*” He adds, that Monsieur de Strozzi and he himself demanded of Ambrose Paré, the king's surgeon, to what cause he imputed that monarch's death ? who replied, “ that he had destroyed his lungs and vitals, by constantly and immoderately blowing the horn.” A moment afterwards, however, he talks of poison.—“ *Si est ce qu'on ne scauroit oster aucun d'opinion qu'il ne fut empoissonné, dès que son frere partit pour Pologne ; et disoit on que c'étoit de la poudre de corne d'un lievre marin, qui fait languir long tems la personne, et puis après peu à pen s'en va, et s'eteint comme une chandelle. Ceux qu'on en a soupçonné auteurs, n'ont pas fait meilleure fin.*” These are Brantome's own expressions.—Mezerai, tho' he mentions the suspicions

Maximilian the second, died in a state of religious seclusion at Vienna\*. By his mistress,

1574.

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of poison, yet never formally accuses the queen-mother by name.

The Marechal de Bassompierre says, in his Memoirs, that having one day told Louis the thirteenth, that Charles the ninth had burst a vein in his lungs by blowing the horn, which caused his death ; the king replied, that he would not have died so soon, if he had not drawn on himself his mother Catherine's resentment, and afterwards been so imprudent as to trust himself near her, at the Marechal de Retz's persuasion.—Catherine of Medicis was so conscious of her son's death being imputed to her by the people, that she thought it necessary to inform the governors of the provinces, of all the circumstances of his disorder ; with intent to vindicate herself from the suspicions universally received against her, and too generally credited thro'out France.

\* Elizabeth of Austria, queen dowager of France, after having made a visit to the castle of Amboise, to bid adieu to her infant daughter ; left Paris, on her return into the Imperial dominions, on the 5th of December, 1575. Rodolphus the second, her brother, who had then succeeded to the emperor Maximilian the second, received her ; and under his protection she remained till her death in January, 1592. She was generous, beneficent, and humane in the highest de-

1574. tress, Mary Touchet, the king had one son, Charles, Grand Prior of France, Duke of Angoulesme, and Count de Ponthieu; well known in history by his treasonable connections with the Duke of Biron, under the reign of Henry the fourth.

There is perhaps no character in modern history, upon the merits of which we should decide with so much candor and caution, as on that of Charles the ninth. Educated in a

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gree; but, tinctured with all the devotion characteristic of the age, and particularly of the house of Austria. Margaret, queen of Navarre, her sister-in-law, found in her more than a sister's affection; Elizabeth, during the imprisonment and distress of that princess, when confined in the castle of Usson in Auvergne, having divided with Margaret the dowry assigned to herself as a queen of France. She always preserved an attachment to the memory of Charles the ninth, and refused to yield to the importunities of Philip the second, king of Spain, who requested her hand in marriage. When Henry the third passed thro' Vienna, on his return from Poland into France, Maximilian the second proposed to him an alliance with his daughter, the young queen dowager; but the offer was declined by Henry. Elizabeth founded the convent of St. Claire, at Vienna, in which she resided, and where she ended her life.

corrupt

corrupt and vicious court, under the pernicious counsels of Catherine of Medicis ; all the principles of humanity and beneficence with which nature had endowed him, were either extinguished, or were perverted into destructive and furious passions. In the powers of discernment and capacity, he was hardly inferior to Francis the first, his grandfather. He possessed a comprehensive and retentive memory, an energy of expression the most happy, and uncommon personal, as well as intellectual activity. Master of keen penetration, and acquainted with the human heart, he piqued himself on his skill in discovering its sentiments thro' the closest disguise.

No prince of the house of Valois, so eminent for intrepidity, excelled him in courage. His munificence was truly royal, because it was unlimited and impartial ; not confined to minions and parasites, like that of his brother Henry the third. With intent to prevent his application to public affairs, those who were placed about his person, endeavored to engage him in acts of intemperance and debauchery. To irregularities of the latter description, he was constitutionally little addicted ; and hav-

1574. ~~~~~~~ ing once perceived that wine had so far disturbed his reason, as to induce him to commit some acts of violence during his intoxication, he never could be persuaded to engage a second time in such excesses, carefully abstaining from them during the remainder of his life, “ Princeps præclara indole, et mag-“ nis virtutibus,” says De Thou, “ nisi qua-“ tenus eas prava éducatione, et matris in-“ dulgentia corrupit.”

In the midst of all the political distractions which the annals of his reign present; by an apparent contradiction, difficult to conceive, he cultivated assiduously the studies that characterize a liberal mind; taking a peculiar pleasure in the society of learned and ingenuous men, with a select company of whom he often unbent himself, and held a sort of academy. He possessed an easy vein of poetry, and some of his compositions in verse yet remain, which do honor to his taste. With talents so comprehensive and various, he might doubtless, under other instructors, and in a more enlightened period of time, when the principles of religious toleration were understood; have been ranked amongst the

the greatest princes who have reigned in France. His vices and crimes were evidently the result of misguided youth, armed with sovereign power, and inflamed by passions naturally impetuous. Even for the massacre of Paris itself, whatever horror it must necessarily excite; yet a mind tinctured with compassion for human error, will make some apology, as far as personally regards the guilt or criminality of the king himself. To his mother alone, and to his pernicious counsellors, that deed of sanguinary and abominable revenge, may principally, if not exclusively be attributed\*.

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\* Brantome, who freely and fully enumerates Charles's defects, and who speaks in terms of detestation, of the massacre of Paris; yet exculpates him on account of his youth, his unprincipled preceptors, and the general corruption of the whole court. It is impossible not to approve the passage, which breathes a generosity and candor of sentiment. “*J'ai veu plusieurs s'étonner,*” says Brantome, “*que, veu la corruption de son regne, et depuis la perte qu'il fit de Monsieur de Sipierre, qui le nourrissoit si bien; comme il fut si imaginaire, si generueux, valeureux, et liberal, comme il a été. Car il a autant étendu sa liberalité que fit jamais roi, à toutes sortes de gens.*”

1574. In his person he was tall, and well shaped, tho' he stooped in his walk, his head usually inclining a little on one side. His complexion was pale, his hair of a deep black, his nose aquiline, and the expression of his countenance keen, as well as penetrating. His neck was long and slender, his chest raised, and all his limbs justly proportioned, except that his legs were considered as rather too large. He excelled in every martial exercise, and managed the horse with distinguished grace and address. Of the diversion of hunting he was immoderately fond, which he pursued to the injury of his health and constitution. The Marechal de Retz, and those persons to whom the charge of his education was committed, had so accustomed him to the habit of swearing, that he intermingled oaths and imprecations in his ordinary discourse\*.

Cut

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\* Brantome, who resided in the court of Charles, and was personally acquainted with all the first nobility of his time, paints the Marechal de Retz in the most frightful colors; accusing him of having corrupted the noble nature of his royal pupil, by every pernicious

Cut off by an immature death, accompanied with circumstances of a very extraordinary nature, just as he began to emerge from the abyss of guilt and infamy, into which a deference to his mother's advice had plunged him ;

1574.

pernicious precept and example. “ Albert de Gondi,” says he, “ Marechal de Retz, étoit un Florentin, fin, “ caut, corrompu, menteur, et grand dissimulateur.” Then continuing his account of the family of Gondi ; “ to speak of him in two words,” adds Brantome, “ his grand-father was a miller, only two leagues from “ Florence : his father was a bankrupt at Lyons ; and “ his mother, grande *Revenderesse de Putaines* ; on “ account of which talent, Henry the second conceived “ a friendship for her, and made her governess of his “ children, particularly of Charles the ninth. The “ Marechal de Retz himself was for a long time, a com- “ missary of provisions in the royal army, till Charles “ advanced him ; and he in return taught the king to “ swear and to dissemble.” Brantome proceeds to draw a comparison, or rather a contrast, between him and the Seigneur de la Cipierre, who had been Charles’s preceding governor ; and who possessed all the endowments of mind and character, requisite for the due discharge of so important a public trust. After his death, the Marechal de Retz perverted all the great qualities of the young king, and accustomed him to deceit and

to

1574. him ; and scarcely known in history, except as the perpetrator of the massacre of St. Bartholomew ; posterity have regarded his character with detestation, rather than with pity, and have condemned him too severely for errors and crimes, which can hardly be considered as his own. That sentiment of commiseration which we spontaneously feel for a prince, whose youth and inexperience rendered him the victim of a pernicious system of intolerance, deeply rooted in the religious prejudices of the age ; the satisfaction connected with rescuing from ignominy a character naturally elevated ; lastly, the impartiality which every lover of history should cultivate, and which is due above all to truth ; these reflections may perhaps impel us to consider

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to imprecations ; “ si bien que le roi,” adds Brantome, “ apprit de lui ce vice ; car de son naturel, il ne l’etoit “ nullement en sa jeunesse, etant fort ouvert, prompt, “ actif, vigilant, et eveillé.”

This description of Brantome is confirmed by almost all the best historians, who impute many of the calamities of this reign, and many of the vices of Charles’s character, to the pernicious precepts of the Marechal de Retz.

Charles

Charles the ninth in a more favorable light, 1574.  
than that in which he has generally been  
represented by the English historians.

The same indecent neglect which had been exhibited at the funeral of Francis the second, more strikingly attended the obsequies of Charles. Some disputes relative to rank and precedence, having arisen among the nobility who followed in the procession, his body was quitted by them between Paris and the abbey of St. Denis; where it was finally conducted, without pomp or state, and deposited in the tomb of his ancestors\*.

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\* Brantôme was himself, as a gentleman of the bed-chamber, one of the very few individuals who accompanied his royal master's body, and saw it deposited at St. Denis.—“*Le corps du roi fut quitté;*” says he, “*estant à l'église de St. Lazare, de tout le grand con-*“*voy, tant des princes, seigneurs, cour de parlement,*“*et ceux de l'église et de la ville; et ne fut suivi et*“*accompagné que du pauvre Monsieur de Arozze, de*“*Funçel, et moi, et de deux autres gentilhommes de*“*la chambre, qui ne voulusmes jamais abandonner*“*notre maître, tant qu'il seroit sur terre. Il y avoit*“*aussi quelques archers de la garde. Chose, qui fai-*“*soit grand pitié à voir!*”—A singular fatality seems to have accompanied this prince; the continual dissen-  
tions

1574. tions which marked his reign, pursuing him even after  
~~~ death.—Elizabeth, queen of England, tho' of a different  
religion from Charles the ninth, yet celebrated his fune-
ral with extraordinary solemnity and magnificence, in
the church of St. Paul, at London.

FINIS.

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Wraxall: The History of
France V. II, 1807

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